

Agency Strategic Plan

For the Fiscal Years 2007-11 Period

by

TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS



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June 23, 2006

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Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2007-2011

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State of Texas

Mission

Texas State Government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer state government in a fair, just and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, state officials will seek new and innovative ways to meet state government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

Philosophy

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise we will promote the following core principles.

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics or individual recognition.
- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.
- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local governments closest to their communities.
- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. Just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more than their future and the future of those they love.
- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.
- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse, and providing efficient and honest government.
- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly

Priority Goal

To ensure Texans are effectively and efficiently served by high quality professionals and businesses by:

- Implementing clear standards;
- Ensuring compliance;
- Establishing market based solutions; and
- Reducing the regulatory burden on people.

Benchmarks

- Percent of veterinary licensee population without documented violations.
- Percent of documented complaints to the agency resolved within 6 months.
- Percent of individuals given a test for licensure who received a passing score.
- Percent of new and renewed licenses issued via the internet.
- Percent of new professional licensees as compared to the existing population.
- Percent increase in utilization of the State Business Portal.

Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Mission

The mission of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary services for the people of Texas.

Philosophy

The Board and its staff will act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency and openness. We affirm that protection from less than quality veterinary services is a public and private trust. We approach our activities with a deep sense of purpose and responsibility. The public and regulated community alike can be assured of a balanced and sensible approach to regulation.

Introduction

Veterinary Medicine, The Industry

With roots dating back as early as 1766 BC, veterinary medicine is an ever growing, ever changing field. Veterinarians of old utilized such things as acupuncture, olive oil, and wine to treat animal ailments. With advances in science and medicine, today's veterinarian has new tools to work with and faces challenges not seen by his or her predecessors. They are asked to play an increasing role in the prevention and/or treatment of zoonotic diseases and acts of bio-terrorism and agri-terrorism. In addition, how animals are thought of is rapidly changing. Animals, who were once thought of as mere property, today are seen as companions, members of the family. Society is placing higher values on animals, and, as a result, is placing higher social values on veterinary medicine and increased economic value on veterinary services. These changes make regulation of the field more important than ever before.

Because veterinary medicine is a large industry and greatly affects the public's welfare, regulation is imperative. The industry of veterinary medicine includes such areas as private practice, non-traditional veterinary services (zoos, wildlife, fisheries, and animal shelters), academia, as well as employment within state, local and federal government entities. Veterinary medicine makes many contributions to the public sector through services rendered, jobs, taxes paid, and goods purchased.

The Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA) issued a report in December 2004 entitled "The Economic Impact of Veterinary Medicine on the State of Texas" which shows the veterinary community's economic contributions to the State of Texas.

Category	Total Output Effects	Total Value Added Effects	Labor Income Impact	Job Impact	Indirect Business Tax Effect
Veterinary Salaries and Ancillary Staff	\$1,132,027,449	\$428,663,484	\$369,122,803	12,871.1	\$25,068,809
Non-Traditional Veterinary Medicine	\$100,678,625	\$40,470,239	\$30,576,051	1,551	\$2,477,385
Academia	\$49,276,580	\$21,425,828	\$17,568,223	717.3	
State and Local Government	\$87,601,564	\$38,885,871	\$33,907,102	4961.0	\$1,858,085
Federal Government	\$65,751,359	\$49,158,549	\$39,606,346	1,057.4	\$1,441,033

An additional factor of the veterinary medicine industry lies in drugs, medical supplies, and other goods sold.

Category	Drugs, Supplies, Goods Sold
Private Practice	\$703,363,965
Non-Traditional	\$4,874,118
Academia	\$13,925,376
Government	\$31,077,620

Total Output Effects = Texas sales revenue

Total Value Added Effects = state-wide economic impact from employment of all resources of production (land, labor, capital, management)

Labor Income Impact = Total household income from all sources (wages, salaries, profits, rent) resulting from a \$1 change in sales-to-final demand within the veterinary sector.

Indirect Business Tax = Sales tax, franchise tax, property tax paid to Texas.

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medicine

Since its inception in 1911, the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (TBVME) has grown and evolved to fit the changing needs of the public as well as the veterinary community. In order to continue to meet these needs, the Board continues to seek innovative, cost effective ways to regulate the field and provide the best possible product and superior customer service to the public and veterinarians.

In the following pages, we will give an external/internal assessment of the Board. As a part of that process, we will also detail the agency's future plans and current needs. The Board can fund these plans and meet its needs through a minor increase in fees collected from our licensees. It is our belief that both the public and our licensee base would benefit from the added or enhanced services.

External/Internal Assessment

Overview of Agency Scope and Functions

Statutory Basis

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (the Board) was created in 1911 and is governed by the Veterinary Licensing Act, Chapter 801, Occupations Code. Agency practice, procedure and rule making is governed by Government Code, Chapter 2001, the Administrative Procedure Act.

Historical Perspective

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (the Board) was created in 1911. Until 1956, the Board's activities were operated by Board members who volunteered their time. That year the Board was funded to operate an office with paid staff. Since 1911, the Board has issued 10,475 licenses. As of May 2006, 6,882 veterinarians hold a Texas license.

Affected Populations

In a sense, all Texans are affected by the practice of veterinary medicine. Veterinarians have a direct impact on food animal production, one of the major economic segments of the Texas economy. They assist producers in disease prevention, nutrition programs, and general herd/flock management. Veterinarians also have a key role in protecting the public from zoonotic diseases, those transferable from animals to humans. More specifically, all animal owners are affected, whether they own food production animals (cattle, swine, chickens, etc.) or companion animals. Virtually all will need veterinary services at some point.

Main Functions

The Board's principal purpose is to ensure that the citizens of Texas have the services of veterinarians who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed established minimum qualifications to enter practice in this state and to hold those veterinarians accountable to abide by the laws of the state and the rules of the Board. The agency's responsibilities include:

Licensing - The Licensing and Examination division is charged with ensuring that only those persons who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed the minimum qualifications required to be a licensed veterinarian in the state of Texas, enter the practice and provide veterinary services to Texas' citizens.

In order to receive a license to practice in this state, a person must demonstrate that they are at least 18 years of age, have obtained a passing score on the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE), or its predecessors (the National Board Exam and the Clinical Competency Test), and the State Board Exam (SBE) and have graduated from a school or college of veterinary medicine that is approved by the Board and accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association or, if not approved and accredited, hold a certificate from the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) or the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG). The Licensing and Examination section is responsible for reviewing and verifying that these requirements are met, assisting prospective licensees with the application process to take the NAVLE, and administering exams necessary for the various types of veterinary licenses.

The Licensing and Examination division is also responsible for the annual renewal of veterinary licenses. Staff of this division review each application for renewal or on-line renewal reports to ensure that continued education requirements are met, licensees are in compliance with applicable laws, and that fees are submitted prior to issuing a renewal certificate.

Enforcement - The enforcement program is designed to protect consumers of veterinary services and ensure veterinarians comply with the Veterinary Licensing Act and Rules of Professional Conduct through the investigation of complaints and compliance inspections, as well as the

Main Functions (Continued)

investigation of the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

Approximately one half of the agency's staff resources are devoted to the investigation and resolution of complaints from the public about the professional conduct of veterinarians. The Board has a range of disciplinary authority. Under certain circumstances, it can refuse to examine applicants, suspend, probate suspension, and revoke licenses; issue administrative and civil penalties; and, hold settlement conferences concerning alleged violations of the Veterinary Licensing Act. Timely, competently performed complaint investigations are perhaps the most direct consumer services the Board staff performs. Both the complainant and the responding veterinarian are relieved when a complaint is resolved, often regardless of the outcome. This is particularly true if both believe that justice was served. The goal for the average number of days to resolve complaints is 140 days. We continue to believe that this is a worthy goal to achieve.

Another critical dimension to the regulatory role is conducting compliance inspections. The Board's compliance inspection program is a valuable tool not only to ensure standards are met, but also to educate licensees and reduce violations and subsequent complaints. However, due to budgetary constraints, these visits have now been replaced by a simple, but much less effective inspection of veterinarians by use of the US Postal system. The agency initiated this "by-mail" compliance inspection program in FY2005. During FY2005, the agency conducted 613 compliance inspections. Five hundred twenty three (523) were conducted by-mail. The board anticipates conducting 1000 by-mail inspections during FY2006, and no "on-site" inspections. The Board's goal is to restore the on-site inspections.

Peer Assistance - The peer assistance program, authorized by Chapter 467 of the Health and Safety Code, assists veterinarians and veterinary students who are impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness. Participation may be voluntary or required by a board order. The Board's program, approved by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, is administered through a contract with the Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA). The association subcontracts with a peer assistance professional that is Board certified in addiction medicine, and has committees of volunteers who assist. In 1998, the Board competitively bid the contract to operate the program. As a result, it entered into a formal contract with the association and continued the previous relationship. This contract was renewed for the 2006 - 2007 biennium.

As required by the general appropriations bill, an annual audit of the program was conducted for fiscal year 2003 and 2004 activities to affirm that the program is effective and all necessary safeguards are in place. An audit of FY2005 activities will be conducted and the report available by August 2006.

Who We Are In The Public's Perspective

The TBVME is the primary agency responsible for ensuring the public's welfare with regards to veterinary medicine. Texans who are animal owners are the potential public who will come in contact with the Board. Veterinarians are required to post information about the Board and contact information in their offices. This ensures that the veterinarian's clientele are aware of the Board and their right to file a complaint. The complaint form is available on the agency's website along with brochures that outline the complaint process.

Organizational Aspects

Size and Composition of Workforce

The Board has 11 positions, 10 full-time and one part-time. Four positions are classified as Official/administrator, five as professional, and two as administrative support. The workforce is currently 63% male and 37% female.

Organizational Structure and Process

The agency is governed by a board of directors that consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor of Texas. The make-up of the board is six veterinarians and three public members, all of whom serve a term of six years, with staggered appointments being made every two years. The Board meets at least three times a year, February, June and October, with special meetings called as needed. Each October, the Board elects a Vice-President and Secretary and appoints members to three standing committees, the Executive Disciplinary Committee, Rules Committee and the Enforcement Committee. Special committees are created as needed. The Governor appoints the Board President.

The functions of the Board are to:

- Guide the short term and long term direction of the agency and its policies;
- Hire the Executive Director and supervise the administration of the agency;
- Formulate the policy objectives of the agency;
- Approve the agency's operating budget and requests for legislative appropriations;
- Set fees to cover the cost of administering the Veterinary Licensing Act;
- Adopt rules as necessary to implement the statute; and
- Impose disciplinary actions against those veterinarians and lay persons who violate the Veterinary Licensing Act and rules promulgated by the Board.

TBVME has four divisions organized along functional lines: Administration, Enforcement, Licensing and Examination, and Fiscal.

Administration – The Administration division consists of the Executive Director, the Executive Assistant/Director of Human Resources, and the agency's General Counsel. This division is responsible for such functions as:

- Administration of the agency's programs, including licensing and examination and enforcement;
- Monitoring the agency's budget;
- Human Resources;
- Records Management;
- Open Records;
- Risk Management;
- Disaster Recovery;
- Customer Service;
- Representing the Board and agency in all legal matters, including the formulation of disciplinary actions and administrative rules; and
- Representing the agency before the Legislature, and with other private and governmental entities.

Enforcement – The Enforcement division consists of the Director of Enforcement, 3 Investigators and an Administrative Assistant. The key functions of the division are:

- Investigating and resolving complaints filed by the public and veterinarians;
- Administering informal settlement conferences;
- Compliance inspections and special investigations; and
- Educating both veterinarians and the public with regard to state law and Board rules that govern the practice of veterinary medicine.

Licensing and Examination – The Licensing and Examination division consists of a Director and a half-time support person. This division's key function is to administer the agency's licensing and examination program through the:

- review and processing of applications for licensure;
- administration of the State Board Examination;
- providing notice of and processing of license renewals;
- overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the office computer systems and equipment, including the agency's website and licensing database;
- reviewing and obtaining approval of CE programs; and
- making recommendations to improve the licensing and examination programs.

Fiscal – The Fiscal division consists of a Chief Fiscal Officer and a half-time support person. The divisions key functions are:

- Preparing and proposing agency budgets;
- Accounting;
- Handling cash receipts and payment processing;
- Purchasing and contract administration;
- Agency payroll;
- Managing the agency's Historically Underutilized Business program; and
- Managing fixed assets.

Geographical Location of Agency

The Board office is located in the William P. Hobby building state office space located at 333 Guadalupe in Austin Texas.

Service Population

The population served by the Board is statewide. Primary contacts between the agency and the public relate to the licensing status of a veterinarian or to file or follow up on a complaint. The Board offers a toll free complaint line, provided through the Health Professions Council, to ensure easy public access to the complaint process. Veterinarians also frequently contact the board to seek clarification about Board rules and those of other regulatory bodies that affect their profession.

Human Resource Strengths and Weaknesses

The agency is fortunate to have staff who offer many strengths, including a high level of skill, tenure, dedication to the agency's mission and the ability to manage an ever-changing world. Because the agency is small, only 11 staff members, and currently has no training budget, the agency has had to ensure that all new hires have already well developed skills. This has allowed the agency to replace terminated staff with individuals who are highly skilled and who have a high capacity for learning, thus allowing them to easily fill voids and bring new ideas for improving processes, while keeping costs to a minimum. Tenured and new staff alike have shown an amazing ability to adapt to changes and difficult situations brought on by an increased workload and budget cuts.

Weaknesses can be noted in the agency's ability to provide employee incentives. With only a few exceptions, most of the staff who have left the agency in the last five years have done so to gain better pay and more opportunities for advancement. As with most agencies, the Board's lack of available funding for employee incentives and training opportunities has had a negative impact on its ability to attract and retain competent staff.

Capital Asset Strengths and Weaknesses

The agency sees no need for any capital improvement during the 2007 – 2011 period that would exceed the \$25,000 threshold. No plans exist for capital improvement projects meeting the criteria established for submission of a Statewide Capital Plan to the Bond Review Board. The agency currently has three areas of concern with regard to capital assets.

Computers: 86.2% of the agency's current computer equipment is beyond the recommended replacement schedule produced by the Texas Department of Information Resources. This places the agency at risk of not being able to remain technologically competitive. With the current need to move agency services to e-commerce, this impacts our ability to serve our customers in the best possible manner.

Copier: The agency's copier was purchased in 1999. At the time the copier was purchased, the

Agency Use of HUBs

agency utilized a copy service to complete large duplication jobs. Due to budget cuts in previous years, the agency had to discontinue this practice and move duplication work to the in-house machine. The current copier is no longer sufficient to meet the agency's needs in this area due to the age of the machine and the increased number of copies needed. The agency must replace the copier during FY2007.

Additional Office Space: To accommodate the increasing number of complaints and an ever-growing licensee base, the agency will need to expand its workforce during the next five years. This expansion will require the board to seek additional space in which to house new employees.

It is the intent of the Legislature that each state agency makes a good faith effort to increase purchasing and contract awards to historically underutilized business (HUB's). Since fiscal year 1996, the percentage of total purchases expended with HUB's has ranged from 8.1% to 39.5%. The average percentage over that period of time has been 21%. The Board will continue to fulfill internal policies governing purchases of goods and services that will encourage meaningful and substantive inclusion of HUB's. In addition, the Board will continue to follow purchasing procedures to ensure a proportionately high use of HUB's that are qualified to offer such goods and services at competitive prices. Progress in these areas is as follows:

HUB Strategic Plan Progress Report

Category	FY05 Actual	Goal for FY06	FY06 As of 4/17/06
Professional Service Contracts	100%	20%*	100%
Other Services Contracts	9.0%	33.0%*	4.96%
Commodities Contracts	82.2%	12.6%*	90.6%
Overall HUB Expenditures	29.5%	20.0%	37.6%

*Statewide-unadjusted goals established by TBPC Rule 111.11 - 111.24.

Constraints:

- A constraint is that the Texas Industries for the Blind and Handicapped is now under term contract to provide temporary employees. Each year, the agency hires a temporary employee for approximately ten weeks to assist with processing license renewals. This represents an expenditure of about \$4,000. This was traditionally a service provided to us by HUB's. We have been consistently very pleased with the employees provided by TIBH and support the term contract. However, use of the term contract does prevent us from using a HUB for this annual contract.
- Another constraint is that our database, the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS), is a custom written application. Maintenance of the database is provided by the company from which we purchased the application in 1994 and it is proprietary.
- Whenever possible, we purchase services from other state agencies. We have had excellent results by doing this; but again, this does prevent us from soliciting business from HUBs for those services.
- The limited purchasing needs of the Board does not normally involve contracts that are of such size or complexity as to permit subcontracting.

Use of the Internet to identify HUBs has greatly enhanced the agency's ability to identify and locate HUBs and include them in our bid solicitations.

**Key
Organizational
events and areas
of change, and
the impact on the
agency.**

The TBVME may face many changes over the coming fiscal years that would impact the agency's organization.

Sharing of Administrative Functions with Other Health Professions Council (HPC) Members.

HPC members continue to review options available for sharing administrative functions between the smaller Boards. The Board may realize some efficiencies and savings as a result of this effort.

Consolidation and Outsourcing of Human Resources Functions

During the 78th legislative session, the Council on Competitive Government was charged with conducting a feasibility study to determine the feasibility of consolidating and outsourcing human resources functions within small agencies. The council continues to review this option. If it is determined that outsourcing these functions would save the state money as a whole, the Board would begin moving its human resource functions to the chosen contractor. While this decision may save funds across agencies, it will in fact cause an increase in expenditures for the Board and will not result in a reduction of FTEs. Currently, the Executive Assistant is the agency's Director of Human Resources in addition to having numerous other responsibilities. Because this function is only .06% of the position's time, the day to day human resources functions would be replaced with acting as the agency's liaison with the contracted entity, in addition to continuing to function as liaison to Board members, the agency's Records Manager, assistant to the Executive Director, Customer Service Representative and various other duties. The cost to the agency would be determined by the amount of the cost of a contract assigned to TBVME.

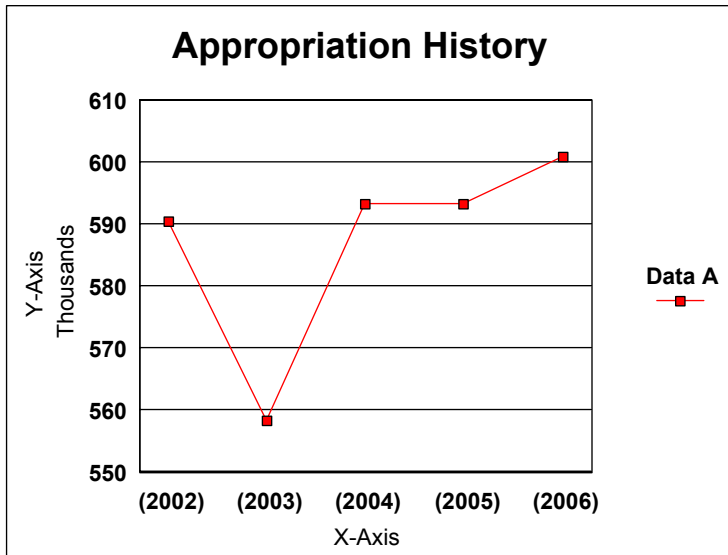
**Use and
Anticipated Use
of Consultants**

The agency currently does not utilize any consultants and does not anticipate the need for any over the next five years.

Fiscal Aspects

Size of Budget

The Board's total operating appropriations for fiscal year 2006 is \$601,049. Over the five-year period 2002 through 2006, the agency's budget increased approximately 1.7%. In fiscal year 2003, the Board was mandated to reduce its operating budget by 7%, which was approximately \$40,400. Although the chart below reflects that the Board's budget increased in fiscal year 2004, this is not the case. The Board was mandated by the 78th Legislature to collect subscription fees for Texas Online and transfer those collected fees to Bearing Point, Inc. While this causes the budget to appear as though it was increased by an amount equal to the fees collected, the agency did not see an increase in its operating budget. The Board receives 100% of its appropriations from General Revenue and receives no federal funds.

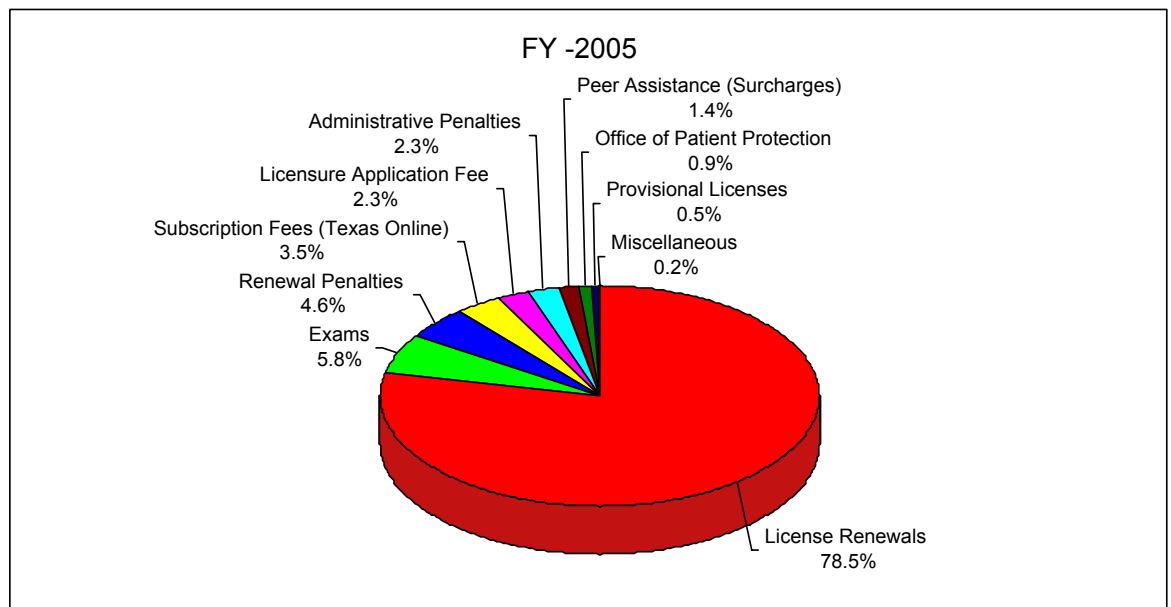


Method of Finance

The Board's main source of revenue comes from fees derived from license renewals, examinations, and issuance of new licenses. The estimated revenue for FY2006 is \$850,521 compared to \$854,625 received in FY2005. All receipts are deposited in the Treasury Division of the Comptroller of Public Accounts into the General Revenue Fund and are expended in accordance with the General Appropriations Act. Of total revenues collected in FY2005, 78.5% came from license renewals, 5.8% from examinations, 4.6% from penalties on late renewals, 3.5% subscription fees (Texas Online), 2.3% from license applications, 2.3% from administrative penalties, 1.4% from peer assistance (surcharges), 0.9% from office of patient protection, 0.5% from provisional licenses, and 0.2% from miscellaneous items such as mailing lists and labels and open records requests. Additional revenue is generated by a professional tax of \$200 per paid active license renewal. The Board collected \$1,103,800 in professional taxes on active licenses. In FY2005, the total revenue collected by the Board was \$1,958,425.

**Budget
Limitations and
Plans to Comply
With or
Accommodate
Caps**

**Degree To Which
Budget Meets
Current And
Expected
Demands**



The Board is limited to its appropriation and number of employee full time equivalent positions set out in S.B. 1, General Appropriations Act of the 79th Legislature. The 79th Legislature imposed mandatory restrictions on out-of-state travel expenditures for fiscal years 2006 and 2007, at an amount not to exceed 100% of the out-of-state travel in fiscal year 2000.

The agency's budget falls short in two significant areas.

Resolution of Complaints: From FY1999 to FY2005, the Board has seen an increase of complaints submitted of 47.25% and expect this trend to continue. To appropriately and adequately represent the public's interest in these matters and maintain a reasonable closing time for each complaint, the agency's enforcement staff will need to be increased.

Travel Funding: During the 79th Legislature, the Board underwent review by the Sunset Commission. A result of that review was the passage of S.B. 407, which requires the Board to have two additional Board Members attend informal settlement conferences. In order for the Board to comply with S.B. 407, the Board has had to eliminate random onsite compliance inspections of our veterinarians.

The Board will request the additional travel funding in the 2008-2009 Legislative Appropriation Request to offset the Board's increased travel expenses associated with complying with S.B. 407.

Service Population Demographics

The growth rate for the number of persons licensed is expected to remain between 2.6 and 3.0% annually. The number of newly graduated veterinarians is expected to remain level. The Texas A & M University, College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) projects that enrollment in their program will remain at around 125 new admissions per year over the next several years. Not all new Texas graduates seek licensure in this state.

The veterinary profession as a whole is becoming more mobile. Veterinarians are employable in almost any community. More veterinarians are being employed by national/regional corporations that have practices in multiple states, and may be transferred from state to state. Current laws, rules and examination timetables enable new graduates as well as out-of-state practitioners to obtain a license to

practice veterinary medicine in a shorter period of time. Existing fee structures allow for an inactive license status which helps practitioners located out-of-state to maintain their Texas license.

Veterinary medicine is an ever-changing field. With constant advances in medical technology and changes in treatment protocols, the demands placed on veterinarians are increasing by leaps and bounds. In addition, individuals are beginning to see themselves as guardians of animals instead of owners, placing more emphasis on the emotional attachment to animals and opening the door to more litigation and more complaints. As a result of these changes, the number of complaints received by the board has increased. From fiscal year 1999 to fiscal year 2005, the agency has seen an overall increase of 47.25% in the number of complaints received. The agency anticipates an additional increase of 20.4% for fiscal year 2006.

Technological Developments

Impact of Technology on Current Operations

The Board has been successful in staying current with technological changes. There has been continued success with the Texas On-line renewal process as defined by Texas Government code 2054.251 - .267 to provide information technology and web based application functionality to the consumer.

The agency on-line renewal process became available in January 2002. The first year introduced our consumers to the process and resulted in 42 on-line transactions. Since then, there has been increased usage, as the 2003 renewal period increased to 526 on-line transactions, the 2004 renewal period reflected 861 on-line renewals. During the 2005 renewal period, approximately 34% of eligible veterinarians renewed their license on-line. Through strong encouragement from the Board and aggressive advertising, close to 85% of eligible licensees, which is over 5,000 licensees, renewed on-line for the 2006 renewal period.

Hardware and software has been upgraded to support the environment and to increase efficiency and accessibility, as budget allows. The agency goal is to further automate reports produced by the licensing database needed for performance reporting requirements. All staff have email capabilities and internet access. The board's network, database and share files are located on a Microsoft Windows 2003 server and secured behind a firewall.

In FY 2003, the agency entered into an interagency contract with the Health Professions Council to obtain IT services and participate in the imaging system. This contract has been extended through the current year, as this arrangement has worked well for this agency.

The agency website is located in-house, runs on MS Windows XP and has been fully operational since FY 2003. Updates to the website are published regularly, the agency has full control of content and has included the use of web based applications that allows access of public information regarding a licensee to help better serve our external customers.

Impact of Anticipated Technology Advances

Upgrading of hardware and software continues to stay technologically compatible with industry demands, while remaining consistent with other agencies and private consumer organizations, and with increasing state government electronic services. IT policies have been written and adopted for acceptable use of information resources, passwords, network security and email. The benefits of participating in the HPC imaging system will be secure records storage and archiving, shared web accessibility and recoverable file storage space of the server. It is also the agency's goal to increase the usage of on-line services and access, as well as, cross-government and interagency activities to our consumers.

Degree of Agency Automation

Most of the agency's functions are fully automated. Some reporting functions of data taken from the agency's LAN are semi-automated and some require manual collection of data for reporting. As the budget allows, current applications may require future revisions to be fully automated.

Agency utilized telecommunication technology allows for a toll free number for consumers to leave messages, basic information and requests. All staff member are equipped with telephones and voice mail functionality.

Anticipated Need for Automation

Private industry trends are influencing state government annually to lean more and more toward meeting the demands of consumers and providing them with an array of electronic services and e-Commerce transactions. There will be a need for more automation in the future. As with all agencies, there will be a challenge to retain the necessary IT talent capable to build and maintain the growing electronic projects and trends. It is the goal of the agency to capitalize on the current return of their investment on information resource assets until IT budgets and funding can be increased to support these trends and remain technically competent among other state agencies, as well as serving the general public.

Agency Priority Issues External**Unauthorized Practice Of Veterinary Medicine**

The Board is responsible for enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act. This responsibility includes jurisdiction over licensees and those who practice veterinary medicine without a license. The Act makes practicing without a license a Class A misdemeanor. A violator is also subject to a civil penalty of \$1,000 for each day of violation. The Board must request the attorney general to bring an action to recover a civil penalty.

Equine Dentistry

One example of a common veterinary procedure performed by non-veterinarians is equine dentistry. The Act defines veterinary medicine to include dentistry, yet a number of laypersons in Texas perform dental work on horses. Although teeth "floating" can be done by lay persons, other, more invasive procedures involving the use of power equipment may pose a danger to the animal if not done by competent professionals. Additional concerns exist in that many of these procedures require the animal to be sedated. Drugs used for sedation are generally controlled substances that require a registration through the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency as well as training in the appropriate use and dosage of the drugs. If not administered appropriately, these drugs can lead to other medical issues and/or the death of the patient. Unauthorized practice of this nature leaves the consumer vulnerable as these individuals are not accountable to any licensing agency.

Alternate therapies.

In addition to the "traditional" subsets of veterinary medicine such as surgery, reproduction and obstetrics, dermatology, cardiology, etc., veterinary medicine also includes "alternate therapies" such as holistic medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, laser therapy, etc. These disciplines must be practiced by a veterinarian or under the direction and supervision of a veterinarian. The Board has adopted rules covering these practices, but from time to time questions arise as to whether persons who perform animal services, such as massage therapy, must be veterinarians or work under the supervision of veterinarians. In addition, questions often arise as to whether certain subsets such as holistic medicine should be subject to the same requirements of establishing the veterinarian-client-patient relationship, record keeping, etc., that traditional practice veterinarians are required to adhere to.

Enforcement of the Act against persons practicing without a license is difficult. Investigations are time consuming, expensive, and successful prosecution is difficult because often the person utilizing the

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

services of a non-veterinarian are not necessarily dissatisfied with the services he or she receives. Thus, the non-veterinarian and client are willing participants in the violation, and willing witnesses are difficult to obtain. In addition, successful criminal prosecution is rare because few local prosecutors assign a high (or any) priority to such cases.

The Board will continue to address the issues of unauthorized practice and alternate therapies as resources and staff allow.

Foreign Graduate Programs

During the last legislative session, the issue of the board's support of recognizing two "foreign graduate certification programs" was raised. This issue is better labeled "graduates of non-accredited veterinary schools."

All state boards have basic requirements for licensure. For Texas, these basic requirements consist of:

- At least 18 years of age;
- A passing score on the National American Veterinary Licensing Examination or one of its predecessors'
- Take and pass the State Board Exam; and.
- Graduate of an accredited school or college of veterinary medicine
 - Individuals who are graduates of a non-accredited school, may qualify by completing a certification program and meeting the remaining three requirements.

For individuals who have graduated from a non-accredited school, meeting the last requirement can be a difficult and expensive hurdle to overcome, especially when only one means of meeting the requirement is available.

Currently, graduates of non-accredited schools such as Ross University (St. Kitts, West Indies) and St. George Veterinary College (Island of Grenada), may meet this requirement by obtaining a certificate from either the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) program or through the American Association of Veterinary State Board's (AAVSB) Program for Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE). These programs are similar in the steps necessary for completion and each program takes 12 to 24 months to complete, depending on the individual. The cost of each program is only a few hundred dollars apart, with PAVE being the lower of the two. Both programs are beneficial to the prospective licensee and the public as they verify that the individual graduated from a veterinary school listed with the World Health Organization, showed proficiency in the English language, and passed a basic knowledge of veterinary medicine and clinical sciences exam.

The issue that has been raised in the past is whether or not two programs are necessary. The Board believes that allowing prospective licensees access to both programs is beneficial to both the individual and the public. Limiting graduates of non-accredited schools to only one program significantly raises the amount of time needed to acquire a license to practice. This places a hardship on individuals who have already garnered a significant amount of debt to complete their schooling and limits the public's access to qualified veterinarians. Texas as a whole could suffer significantly as a recent study reported in DVM News Magazine projects that Texas will need 150 new veterinarians each year for the next six years. Veterinary colleges across the nation, including Texas A & M University, will not be able to fill this need as their class sizes are very limited.

In 1965, the AVMA, recognizing the need for licensure among graduates of non-accredited schools, established the ECFVG program to recognize graduates of schools of veterinary medicine outside the United States and Canada. As the years passed and more non-accredited schools were established, the ECFVG began to accumulate a backlog of individuals wishing to seek licensure in the United States. Due to the high number of applicants to the program, an individual could be forced to wait 18 to 24 months to begin the process. This meant that they would not be eligible to apply for licensure for up to four years.

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

Based on complaints received from students and their parents about the length of time needed to get into the ECFVG program, the AAVSB determined that another alternative was needed. The AAVSB developed and implemented the PAVE program to meet this need.

As graduates from non-accredited schools will continue to play a role in filling the public's need for qualified veterinarians, it is imperative that Texas maintain its ability to attract the best and the brightest individuals. In order to accomplish this, Texas must continue to utilize an efficient means of certifying those individuals who wish to seek licensure here, but who graduated from a non-accredited school. The Board believes that means is continuing to offer acceptance of certification from both the PAVE and ECFVG programs.

Internal

State Office of Administrative Hearings

Funding for Hearings and Alternative Dispute Resolution

Under the Texas Administrative Procedure Act and the Veterinary Licensing Act, a veterinarian accused of violations is entitled to have his or her case heard before the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) if the veterinarian does not agree with the Board's determination and/or settlement offer. For these hearings, the Board must provide witnesses, depositions, transcripts, and other expenses associated with a trial. A one-day hearing can easily cost \$5,000 or more.

Due to limited funding, the Board must assign priorities to potential SOAH cases each year. In past years, the board has been able to prosecute about one SOAH case per year. With the rising cost of doing business and reduced funding over the last two biennium, the agency did not have sufficient funds for SOAH hearings in FY2006. As a result, the board currently has two cases that have been postponed until funding can be acquired. In addition, the agency has been forced to settle several cases and reduce sanctions on others where the agency felt prosecuting them was in the best interest of the public. The inability to move cases to SOAH when necessary ultimately affects the ability of the Board to remain an effective regulatory entity and impedes its ability to protect the public. It also discourages veterinarians and their attorneys from settling cases at an early stage.

Similarly, the last legislature added alternate dispute resolution (ADR) as an enforcement tool for the Board's disciplinary program. Implementation of ADR will require additional funding.

Requiring Non-prevailing Party To Pay Costs Associated With Hearings

Related to the costs of bringing a contested case hearing at SOAH is the concept that a person who is found to have violated the Act or Board rules can be assessed the Board's administrative costs of conducting the hearing. Although some agencies, such as the Board of Nursing Examiners, have statutory authority to assess such costs to the violator (Occupations Code 301.461), the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners does not. Providing this statutory authority would greatly assist the Board in vigorously pursuing enforcement cases through SOAH and provide an important incentive for early settlements of disputes.

Enforcement Issues

Required Prescriptions

Legislators during the last session considered the issue of requiring a veterinarian to write prescriptions for pet medications, upon request of the pet owner. The prescriptions can then be filled at local or internet pharmacies. Currently, veterinarians have the unrestricted ability to fill prescriptions out of their own drug inventories. A significant percentage of a veterinarian's income may be derived from drug sales. Some pet owners say that restricting the providing of prescriptions to veterinarians is anti-competitive and deprives consumers of the ability to find the best price. Requiring veterinarians to write prescriptions could potentially increase the number of complaints received by the board.

Informed Consent, Vaccination Protocol

Animal vaccination practices are evolving rapidly based on recent scientific and medical studies

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

concerning the desired frequency of vaccinations and the efficacy and duration of various vaccines. Thus, the standard of care in this area is also evolving. Some veterinarians have suggested that the Board should establish by rule or law new vaccination protocols and penalize veterinarians when they do not adhere to them. The Board believes that each patient's situation is unique and is therefore reluctant to establish practice standards in this area. Even with the new research, questions and disagreements remain among veterinarians. In addition, pathogens constantly change and thus demand changes in protocols. What may be a serious infectious agent today may not be so serious in years hence. Ultimately, the Board believes that veterinarians should use their discretion based on best available evidence and as a result, new standards of care will be established.

The Board believes that pet owners should be informed by the veterinarian as to the need for particular vaccinations versus the possible associated risks ("risk-benefit") so they can give informed consent to the particular vaccination protocol offered. This will encourage understanding between owner and veterinarian and assure maximum protection for the animal without unnecessary expense. Ultimately, this will result in fewer complaints filed against veterinarians.

The Board has issued two policy statements to veterinarians suggesting that they review their vaccination protocols and encourage informed consent by the owner to vaccinations offered by the veterinarian. The Board is encouraged that veterinarians are responding to these considerations.

Commissioned Peace Officers

This session the Board will again seek to obtain Peace Officer Status authority for two of its investigators. As the primary protector of the public's welfare with regard to veterinary services, the board must be able to function in the arena of criminal justice agencies.

In recent years, the board has faced situations in which its ability to protect the public has been compromised by the inability to communicate with and function as peace officers.

Controlled substances/dangerous drugs – Veterinarians maintain inventories of controlled substances within their practices. This situation has led to instances of drug abuse and/or diversion by veterinarians. The board has found that when a criminal justice entity becomes involved in the investigation of these crimes, in most cases the board does not have access to information necessary to allow for disciplinary action against the perpetrator's license, including summary suspensions, until there is a conviction. This situation allows the individual to continue to practice while under criminal investigation, even in instances where the public would be at risk.

The practice of veterinary medicine by unlicensed individuals – The board has received complaints regarding the unauthorized practice of veterinary medicine by non-licensed persons. Under the Veterinary Licensing Act, the Board can refer such persons to local prosecutors to seek criminal penalties or to the attorney general for collection of civil penalties. In addition, the Board can also issue cease and desist orders, but such orders are only enforceable by administrative penalty (fine). Due to limited resources, the relatively small penalties associated with the offenses, and other reasons, local prosecutors and the attorney general's office are often reluctant to assign investigatory staff to the cases and pursue charges. These situations endanger the public by allowing unqualified persons to continue to perform ill-advised medical procedures on animals.

The board also receives complaints of health certificates that are forged by unlicensed individuals. In these instances, the public is at risk due to unhealthy animals being transported.

Limited access to criminal justice agency information – Access to information held by criminal justice agencies is generally restricted to other criminal justice agencies and peace officers. The board currently has two licensees facing prosecution for crimes that also violate the Veterinary Licensing Act. One individual is currently awaiting trial for the murder of their spouse with controlled substances. The second individual is currently under indictment for crimes against children. In both cases, the board is unable to access information held as evidence by the criminal justice agencies such as controlled substance logs and witness statements. Over the last 2 – 3 years, the board has seen approximately five of these types of situations. Because the

Agency Priority Issues Continued

board cannot access the evidence and information, it may not take action against a license until there is a final conviction and these individuals are still considered “in good standing” with the board and may continue to practice.

Limited ability to share information with local law enforcement entities – The board currently does not have the authority to share information regarding complaints with local law enforcement entities. While the board may have information that would assist local law enforcement, the information, based on the Veterinary License Act, is considered confidential.

Allowing the board to designate two of its investigators as peace officers would provide the board with the tools necessary to better protect the public

Travel

On-site Compliance Inspections

On-site compliance inspections serve to educate veterinarians about the laws and rules that govern the practice of veterinary medicine. These inspections allow veterinarians and their staff, direct face-to-face access to Board investigators, who can answer questions and give guidance in regard to the veterinarian’s responsibility in meeting the requirements of the Veterinary Licensing Act and the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Unlike most medical professionals, veterinarians are the only prescribing professionals who can purchase and maintain controlled substances and dangerous drugs within their practice. An important part of the compliance inspection is ensuring that these drugs are properly secured, maintained, and accounted for. Prior to the budget constraints of fiscal year 2003, the agency was completing between 400 and 600 inspections each year. However, due to the previously mentioned budgetary constraints, this program was eliminated, even though Board members preferred it be retained.

Special Investigations

Occasionally, investigations are of such significance that they may require additional resources, time and travel funds. These “special investigations” result from an act or series of acts that have the potential of causing great harm to the public. These cases generally fall into the category of alcohol and drug abuse. The veterinarian may be suffering from alcohol intoxication; self-administering controlled substances from their own pharmacy, or may even be diverting these drugs. The harm, from our perspective, is that this same impaired veterinarian may be treating the public’s animals, including food source animals.

Board Member Travel Expenses

During the 79th Legislative session, changes were made to the Veterinary Licensing Act to require three board members in attendance at all informal settlement conferences. In previous years, only one board member attended conferences. This change increased the agency’s travel expenses for informal settlement conferences from an average of \$7,000 annually to \$21,000 annually. No additional funding was added to the agency’s budget to cover this added expense.

Technology

Replacement of Select Computers and Printers

Due to limited funds, the agency replaces PCs and printers only as necessary. It is, therefore, imperative that we take into consideration the lifecycle of a product, as long as it’s technology can be supported. Even though this agency is on a DIR preferred replacement schedule, lack of adequate funds prevent us from replacing PCs as recommended, warranting selective upgrades on hardware parts or software. Problems arise as some PC users utilize one operating system and another group utilizes the operating system necessary for their older computers within the same agency. Agency printers have met or surpassed their life expectancy. Without adequate funds, replacements are not an option. Enforcement is in need of a color printer to show intricacies found on photos submitted by complainants or photos taken during a compliance inspection. The pictures become part of the investigative files that are shared with board members and others on the enforcement committee who

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

may have to render a decision based on the depictions in the photograph. Color is essential in those cases. We will seek funding during the 80th Legislative session.

Software Upgrades for Agency Server

To effectively continue communication with those we serve including members of the profession, it is imperative that the agency is able to upgrade software for the main server. The server is also used for on-line veterinary license renewal and communication and file exchange between the vendor agency (BearingPoint) and the comptroller's office. Continuous security upgrades are necessary to prevent data corruption, unauthorized access and generally meet the statutory requirements set out in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 10, Chapter 206, Subchapter B, which discusses, among other things, security policies and web site accessibility. User-friendly software upgrades encourage the use of the web site and participation in the on-line renewal system. Funding will be sought during the 80th Legislative session.

Veterinary Tracking System

Currently, the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) is the agency's primary licensing and regulatory database maintained on a LAN system. While the VTS system was adequate for the agency's needs when it was first installed in 1994, with the growing licensee base and changes in technology, it has become antiquated and should be replaced to allow the agency more versatility and functionality. The agency, along with many of the health professions boards located in the William P. Hobby building, is considering a database system called LicenseEase through Versa Systems. This system is in use at the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission and the Texas State Funeral Commission and is being considered by the Texas Department of State Health Services. LicenseEase is an expandable licensing database that would allow the agency greater functionality in day-to-day tasks, web based applications for viewing and use by both the public and licensees, and would allow for greater accessibility by impaired individuals. In addition, maintenance and software upgrades of the Versa system (LicenseEase) would be more efficient and cost effective than the services the agency currently receives for the Veterinary Tracking System, which is owned by a single vendor.

A cooperative effort in instituting LicenseEase between all Health Professions Council agencies would minimize individual agency cost, allow for future expansion, upgrades and functionality beneficial to all who use the database, within the agency as well as outside users. Discussions among HPC boards are occurring at this time. This effort would also allow for the continuous utilization of HPC agency shared IT personnel and in-house training and maintenance. For this endeavor, funding will be sought during the next legislative session.

Capital and/or Leased Needs

Copier

The agency purchased a new copy machine in FY1999. The lifespan of a copy machine is approximately five years. Due to the age and the increased demands on the current equipment the Board will request additional funding in the 2008–2009 Legislative Appropriations Request to lease a copy machine.

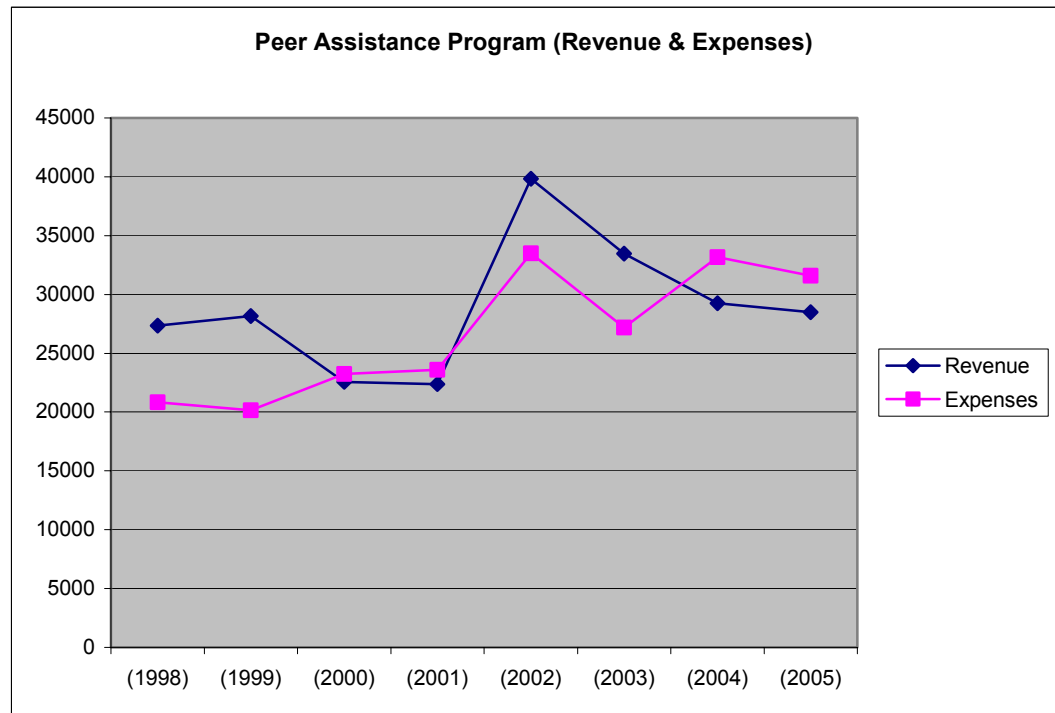
Peer Assistance

The Board's financial support of the Peer Assistance program consists of approximately \$9,000 annually (which is funded by a surcharge added to each license renewal) plus any administrative penalties collected. Administrative penalties are estimated to be approximately \$6,000 per year. The Board would prefer to change the way the program is funded. Collecting enough administrative penalties has proven to be unpredictable. Additionally, the Texas Veterinary Medical Association, the entity contracted to run the program, has stated that beginning July 1, 2007 they will no longer supplement funding in years when the agency has not collected enough fees to fully fund the program.

The Board is recommending that the program be funded 100% by increasing the current surcharge (\$2) on each license renewal. The Board receives the authority under the Health and Safety Code,

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

Chapter 467.004, to add a surcharge of not more than (\$10) to each license renewal to fund an approved peer assistance program. This would allow for a more consistent, reliable funding for the program and placing all of the administrative penalties collected into the general revenue revenue fund would result in an increase in funds available to the State for other priorities.



Agency Publication

The Board produces the *Board Notes* three times each year. The material included in the publication is intended to provide information to licensees and assist them in remaining up-to-date with regard to the laws and rules that impact their licenses. Due to budget cuts, the agency ceased producing the publication in paper format. The publication is provided in electronic format to those individuals who provide the board with an email address. Licensees may also download the publication from the agency's website. The Board sought input from our 2006 customer service survey respondents on their preference for format.

Preferred Format Of Board Notes		
Paper	Email	Download from Website
65%	32%	3%

Because many veterinarians do not have computers, and because the Board has received numerous complaints regarding the electronic production of the publication, the agency will seek authority to assess a fee to all licensees to fund the production and distribution of the newsletter in paper format. This will better serve both the licensee base and the public by ensuring that the board is able to communicate important information to those individuals practicing in Texas.

Agency Workforce

Reclassifications

During the last legislative session, the State's classification system was revised to delete the Program Administrator series. As a result, the agency's Director of Licensing and Examination had to be

Agency Priority Issues, Continued

reclassified to the Program Specialist series. Due to budget constraints, the position was classified as a Program Specialist V. Because the position functions as a director by administering the licensing and examination program, the position should have been classified as a Program Specialist VI. The agency will seek funding to bring the position in line with the appropriate classification.

Funding for Employee Incentives

While the Legislature has provided sufficient tools for the attraction and retention of highly qualified employees, the lack of funding has not allowed the agency to utilize them. The agency will continue to seek funding to allow us to reward employees.

Staff Development

In order to maintain a well-qualified staff and continue to offer the public and the veterinary community advanced services, the agency must be able to obtain job specific training for its employees. The ability to offer training to employees would also allow the agency to consider applicants who may not have all of the needed skills but who would be great additions.

Workforce Changes

- *Part-time to full-time Attorney position* – The agency will request that the agency's staff attorney position, which is currently three quarter time, be made full-time. With the increase in complaints received, the increasing number of veterinarians utilizing legal counsel in disciplinary actions, and the possible addition of equine dentistry, the current part-time position is not sufficient to meet the agency's needs.
- *Administrative Assistant* – The agency will seek an additional Administrative Assistant position to support the agency's attorney and complete general support functions such as answering the agency's main telephone line and providing additional support agency wide where needed. This will allow the agency to move an administrative assistant as full time support for the agency's enforcement division, relieving investigators of the need to complete administrative support functions and giving them greater latitude for investigating complaints, completing special investigations and compliance inspections. Additionally, as the agency's licensee base increases, the position could also support the agency's fiscal division, allowing the agency to move an administrative assistant to full time support of the licensing and examination division.
- *Investigator position* – The agency will seek an additional investigator position. With the rise in the number of complaints received by the agency, the addition of conducting compliance audits by mail, and the need to investigate unlicensed practice, the agency's current investigative staff is not sufficient to handle the growing workload and still meet reasonable resolution times on complaints.
- *Investigator position, Contingent* – If the legislature adds regulation of equine dentistry to the agency's responsibilities, an additional investigator will be required to handle the increased workload.

Economic Variables

The primary types of veterinary practice in Texas are companion animals (dogs, cats, and horses in many instances) and food production animals. The vast majority of veterinarians in Texas are in companion animal practice. Generally, companion animal practitioners may be more affected by significant economic conditions. One factor is that many procedures performed may be discretionary, such as spays and neuters. Veterinarians in food animal practice are more affected by foreign competition and weather conditions.

The agency and the profession contend with lay people performing acts that constitute the practice of veterinary medicine and are illegal. Animal owners seek ways to cut costs or to try novel procedures they believe will remedy problems or enhance performance. The agency receives numerous calls and some formal complaints, mostly from licensed veterinarians, about these

practices. The Board is the complainant in these cases. Gathering information that confirms a violation is more time consuming than the average complaint.

The board's operations are such that there is little it can do to effectively adjust its operations in response to changes in any of the above economic conditions.

Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations

The Board receives no federal funds; however, the agency has a working relationship with three federal agencies: the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Department of Agriculture. Since veterinarians are the only profession allowed to maintain drug inventories and dispense directly to clients/patients, the DEA works closely with the Board.

Other Legal Issues

Impact of Current and Outstanding Court Cases

In August, 2002, the Board joined with the Texas Pharmacy Board in filing a court action against an internet pharmacy that was providing pet medications to pet owners in Texas without a valid veterinarian prescription. Recently, the suit was settled and the internet pharmacy agreed to cease its illegal activities in Texas.

Impact of Local Government Requirements

Currently there are no local governmental requirements that impact the agency.

Self-Evaluation

Opportunities For Improvement

The Board is continuously seeking ways to improve every aspect of its operations and better serve the citizens of Texas and the veterinary community. This commitment to excellence has allowed the Board to operate effectively and efficiently during these times of reduced resources.

Enforcement

Complaints: While the number of complaints received by the Board has fluctuated over the last 10 years, the Board has seen a steady increase. From FY1999 to FY2005, the agency has seen an overall increase of 47.25% in the number of complaints received. The agency anticipates an additional increase of 20% for FY2006. The Board anticipates that this trend will continue. The Board will seek ways to handle the increase in complaints in a manner that will best utilize resources, including funding, while still maintaining the highest possible protection for consumers. Options that may be pursued include the addition of another investigator, shifting of some administrative responsibilities from current investigators to the enforcement assistant, and the training of the enforcement assistant to handle the more routine, lower level aspects of investigations.

Compliance Inspections: Compliance inspections serve to educate veterinarians about laws and rules and to allow them direct face-to-face access to Board investigators who can answer questions and give guidance in regard to a veterinarian's responsibilities in meeting the requirements of state laws and Board rules. However, due to budgetary constraints this program has been eliminated and replaced by a "by-mail" inspection program.

Veterinary Tracking System (VTS)

The Board currently utilizes a database to maintain information on its licensees. As the agency's budget allows, more functionality will be added, program code revised and fields added to allow more expedient retrieval of information. Additional automation of reports would free personnel from some manual calculations of performance measures.

Partnerships

Agency Website

The agency's website will continuously undergo upgrades to allow for additional functionality and, ease the navigation of the site, and will continue to track the government's general goal to improve customer relations and government access through more efficient accessibility of information and assistance.

The Board, through its day-to-day operations as well as its enforcement and licensing functions, partners with many levels of government and private sector organizations to ensure public safety through veterinarian compliance with the State's laws and Board rules and to ensure that the agency works effectively and efficiently, utilizing state funds wisely and prudently.

Health Professions Council (HPC) - The HPC consists of the following health professions agencies:

Texas Board of Chiropractic Examiners;
Texas State Board of Dental Examiners;
Texas Funeral Service Commission;
Department of State Health Services, Professional Licensing and Certification Division
Texas State Board of Medical Examiners;
Board of Nurse Examiners;
Texas Optometry Board;
Texas State Board of Pharmacy;
Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners;
Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners;
Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists; and
Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.

As a member of the HPC family, the Board works closely with other members to find and implement efficiencies within agency administrative functions by sharing staff and other resources. At present, many of the smaller HPC agencies share two information technology staff through the HPC help desk. The HPC also assists member agencies by providing a telephone complaint system, Board member program training, and shared document imaging. HPC members are also reviewing ways to share resources within the areas of fiscal and human resources.

State Government: The Board works in partnership with various state agencies through its licensing and enforcement functions to ensure public safety and veterinarian compliance with laws and rules. The state agencies the Board works most closely with include the Texas Department of Public Safety; Texas Animal Health Commission; Texas Department of Health, primarily the Zoonosis division; Texas Racing Commission; Student Guaranteed Loans; the Office of the Attorney General; and two universities, Texas A & M University and the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to Texas state agencies, the Board is also a member of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB).

Most of the Board's collaboration with these state agencies consists of ensuring that our licensees adhere not only to our rules, but to those of the other agencies. For example, the Texas Department of Health is responsible for setting the requirements of the Rabies Control Act. The Board aligns its rules to support the Rabies Control Act by ensuring that veterinarians maintain rabies vaccination records as required by the Act. The Board also submits its Veterinary Tracking System database (VTS) to the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Attorney General, Child Support Division, and the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation to assist those agencies in the enforcement of their laws, rules and collections.

Texas A & M University and the University of Texas at Austin's respective divisions of Measurement and Research provide independent validation of the agency's State licensing exam relevancy and its merit as well as scores attained by the examinee.

Texas As A Leader

The Board works with the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), along with many other entities, to establish the State of Texas Foreign Animal Diseases Plan. The Board also supports the TAHC's mission by ensuring that only qualified, licensed veterinarians perform veterinary services, including the diagnosis and reporting of diseases within the TAHC scope of regulation.

Federal Government: The Board partners with the Federal Drug Administration, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration in areas of enforcement.

The Board also works with a number of organizations and associations related to veterinarians and animals.

The Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners has been a committed leader in the regulation of the veterinary profession at the national level. Texas board members have been key in the initiation and development of programs that support the regulatory boards in the U.S., the territories of the U.S., and Canada. In 1960 the Association of American Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) was incorporated as a 501 c. 3 corporation. Members of AAVSB meet annually to discuss regulatory issues and explore issues common to all. The AAVSB is governed by its Executive Committee, which consists of 7 members, 6 veterinarians and one public member, all elected from member boards. The term for each member of the executive committee is two years, and the terms are staggered to assure continuity. Also as an assurance of continuity, the president actually serves four years: one year as president-elect, two years as president, and one year as past president. The immediate past president is Dr. Lynn Lawhon, a former chair of the Texas Board.

Initially, AAVSB had no headquarters or staff. All activities were conducted by volunteers of member boards. In the early 1990's, AAVSB began exploring the idea of developing a national disciplinary database. When a board received an application from a veterinarian licensed in another state, it needed an effective method to determine an applicant's disciplinary history. Often applicants are or were licensed in several states. Those who had been revoked or had serious disciplinary actions in another state would simply not indicate they had been licensed in that state. It was not practical for the board receiving an application to contact all other boards to determine if the applicant had been licensed by them and if the applicant had serious disciplinary actions. Dr. Alton Hopkins, member of the Texas Board, was instrumental in getting the states to agree to share their license and disciplinary information so that the database could be established. AAVSB hired staff and opened its first office in 1994. The national licensee database became operational that year.

This was the first of a series of services made available to member boards. Since then the following programs and services have been developed. Texas has always had a representative on the AAVSB Executive Committee that initiated and developed these programs:

- The Practice Act Database and Directory of Licensing Requirements - This program was among the first services provided by AAVSB to member boards. The Directory maintains up to date licensing and application requirements for each jurisdiction and their current laws and rules/regulations. This information can be accessed at AAVSB's website, www.aavsb.org.
- The Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) - This program became operational in 1997. RACE was developed to help both licensing boards and national and regional providers of continuing education (CE). Most state boards require that they approve CE in order for a licensee to obtain credit for participation. Vendors would be required to seek individual approval of all state boards in states they wanted to provide CE. Staff in those boards would be required to review them for approval. RACE provides that service by contracting with professionals who assess those programs, simplifying the process for both the state boards and the vendors.
- The Veterinary Information Verifying Agency (VIVA) - This program became operational in 1998. This service allows veterinarians to register their basic licensing credentials at a single

source. Virtually every licensing entity requires basic documentation such as certified birth certificates, transcripts of graduation, and name changes after marriage. If a veterinarian seeks a license in more than one state, the veterinarian would need to obtain a certified copy of each of these documents. This process is both costly and time consuming. Now, licensees, mostly new graduates, routinely register with VIVA. Since the profession is becoming much more mobile, this service is very helpful to both veterinarians and licensing boards.

- The Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVEE) - In 2000, AAVSB delegates voted to establish an educational equivalence program for veterinarian graduates of unaccredited veterinary schools, most of which are graduates of foreign schools. A task force was established to determine the requirements for the program. The AAVSB board created a board to direct the program and establish operational policies. The Executive Director of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, Ron Allen, is the public member of the PAVE board. The program receives and reviews all documentation of academic work, requires affirmation of English language proficiency, requires passing a basic sciences examination, and affirmation of clinical proficiency. The latter can be met by completing the clinical year (the fourth year) of an accredited veterinary school or completion of a clinical skills examination. The later element became operational this January. Today seventeen states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands recognize the PAVE certificate and more are in the process of changing their law or rules to do so. These states represent 46% of this nation's population. As of March 1, 2006, 115 veterinarians have received PAVE certificates, and 468 are currently enrolled in the program.
- The need for sound assessment and accreditation of graduates of foreign and non-accredited veterinary schools is essential. Most predict that the 28 current veterinary colleges in the U.S. cannot supply all the veterinarians needed. The last state to add a veterinary college was Tennessee in 1974. Three years ago a proprietary veterinarian college was opened in southern California. A recent study by the American Veterinary Medical Association indicated that between 2002-2012, Texas would have 150 job openings each year. It is second only to California, which needs 200 new veterinarians annually. The need will exceed this nation's graduating capacity.
- Substantial progress has been made to develop new programs and strengthen the regulation of veterinary medicine in Texas and the other jurisdictions that make up the veterinary community with which we all interact. Members of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical examiners will always be key players in that effort.

Agency Successes

Continuing Education

Based on changes to the Veterinary Licensing Act mandated by the 79th Legislature, the Board has adopted requirements relating to verifying continuing education credits for Texas veterinarians. Random CE audits by licensing, combined with the Enforcement division's efforts of compliance inspections by mail, has strengthened the agency's continuing education program. The more stringent accounting requirements for both the provider and the attendee have resulted in a more reasonable assurance that the individual has completed the number of CE hours claimed.

On-line Renewal

The 100% participation of eligible veterinarians for on-line renewal is being sought. Due to the licensing division's more aggressive advertising strategy to solicit improved participation—close to 85% of eligible veterinarians have renewed their license on-line during 2006.

Agency Goals

GOALS:

- Board's Basic Purpose - The Board will ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas by establishing and implementing reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigating complaints, and enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act.

**Agency
Objectives and
Outcome
Measures**

B. Historically Underutilized Businesses - The Board will continue to carry out internal policies governing purchases of goods and services that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of historically underutilized businesses.

C. Customer Service - We will manage agency resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible in order to produce the highest possible level of service and benefit to the citizens of the state.

A. GOAL: Board's Basic Purpose - The Board will ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas by establishing and implementing reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigating complaints, and enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act.

A.1 OBJECTIVE: To operate a licensure system that will assure that 100 percent of all veterinarians meet minimum licensure standards.

Outcome Measure: Percent Of Licensees With No Recent Violations
Percent Of Licensees Who Renew Online
Percent of New Licensees Issued Online – The Board is currently exempted from the Outcome Measure relating to the percent of New Licenses Issued Online

STRATEGY: Operate an efficient and comprehensive veterinary licensure program to include initial licensure by examination and the ongoing renewal of licenses.

Output Measures: Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals
Number of Licensees Renewed (Individuals)
Number of Individuals Examined

Efficiency Measures: Average Licensing Cost for Individual License
Average Cost per Exam Administered
Percentage of New Individual Licenses Issued within Ten Days
Percentage of Individual License Renewals Issued within Seven Days

Explanatory/Input Measures: Total Number of Individuals Licensed
Pass Rate

A.2.OBJECTIVE: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules, conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules, and provide a peer assistance program to licensed professionals who are impaired because of chemical dependency.

Outcome Measures: Percent of Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary Action
Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action
Percent of Documented Complaints Resolved within Six Months
Recidivism Rate for Peer Assistance Program
One-Year Completion Rate for Peer Assistance Programs

A.2.1 STRATEGY: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules and conduct a

compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules.

Output Measure: Number of Complaints Resolved
Number of Compliance Inspections
Number of Disciplinary Hearings

Efficiency Measures: Average Time for Complaint Resolution
Average Cost per Complaint Resolved

Explanatory/Input Measures: Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received

A.2.2 STRATEGY: Identify, refer, and assist those veterinarians whose practice is impaired because of chemical dependency.

Output Measures: Number of Licensed Individuals Participating in a Peer Assistance Program

B. GOAL: Historically Underutilized Businesses - The Board will establish and implement internal policies governing purchasing of goods and services that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of historically underutilized businesses (HUB'S).

B.1 OBJECTIVE: To include historically underutilized businesses (HUB's) in at least 20 percent of the total value of contracts and awarded annually by the agency in purchasing contracts by fiscal year 2009.

Outcome Measure: Percentage of Total Dollar Value of Purchasing Contracts Awarded to HUB's

B.1.1. STRATEGY: Develop and implement a plan for increasing the use of historically underutilized businesses through purchasing contracts.

Output Measures: Number of HUB Contractors and Subcontractors Contacted for Bid Proposals
Number of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded
Dollar Value of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded

Strategies undertaken by the Board to increase HUB participation:

- For purchases of \$2,000 to \$10,000, TBVME will solicit at least two of the three required informal bids from certified HUB's, one from a minority-owned business and one from a woman-owned business whenever possible.
- For purchases from \$10,000 to \$25,000, TBVME will solicit at least two of the required formal bids from certified HUB's, one from a minority-owned business and one from a woman-owned business whenever possible.
- The Board will maintain and monitor information monthly pertaining to the use of HUB's.
- The HUB list maintained by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission will be used as a resource for obtaining names of new vendors by commodity code.
- In formal Invitations for Bid where the use of subcontractors is a possibility, the Board will incorporate language to encourage use of HUB's.

C. GOAL: We will manage agency resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible

in order to produce the highest possible level of service and benefit to the citizens of the state.

C.1. OBJECTIVE: To maintain a minimum of 75% customer satisfaction level.

Outcome Measures: Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received.
Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery.

C.1.1. STRATEGY: Evaluate customer satisfaction and for those issues under our control, implement a program to improve areas which are deficient.

Output Measures: Number of Customers Surveyed
Number of Customers Served

Efficiency Measures: Cost per Customer Surveyed.

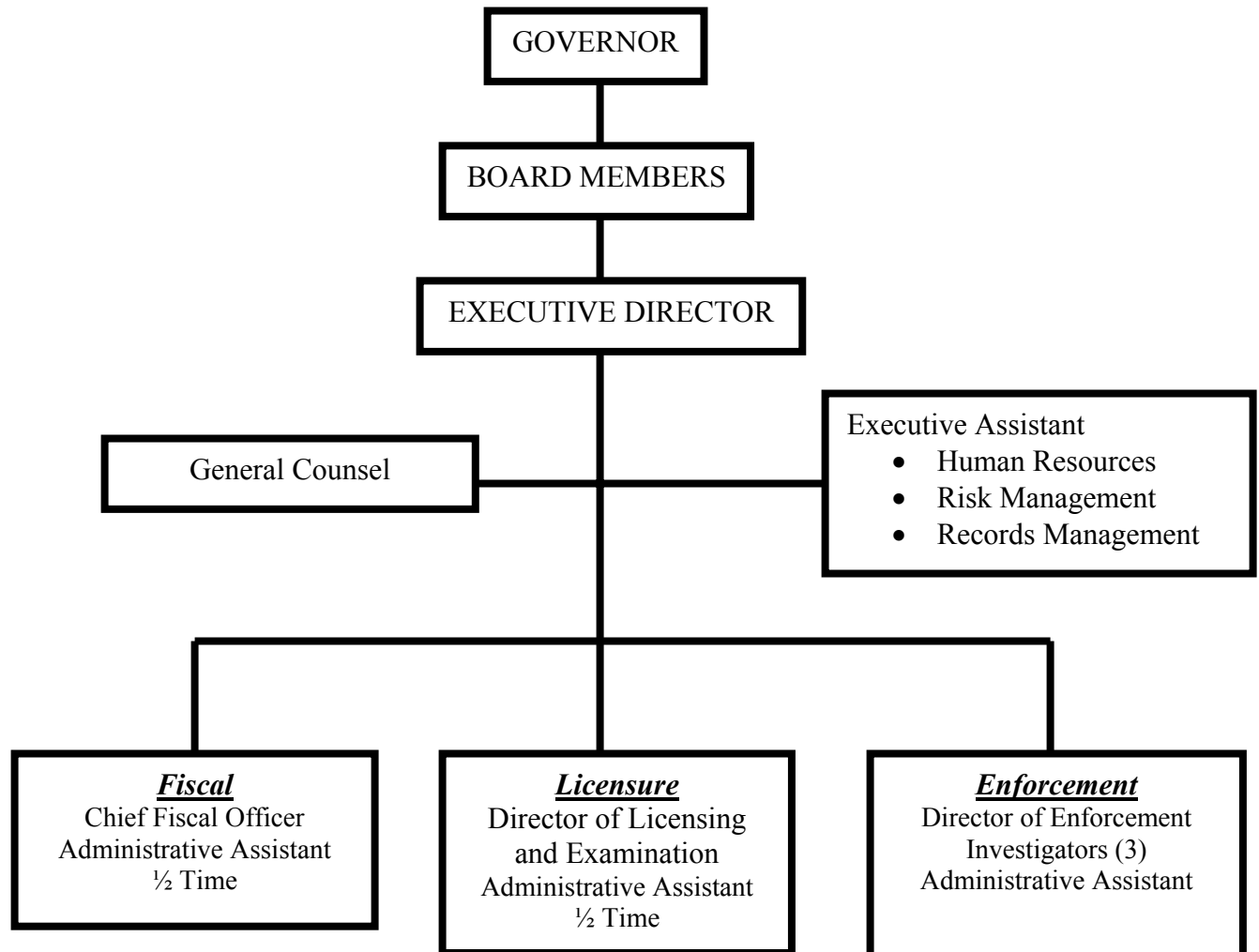
Explanatory Measures: Number of Customers Identified
Number of Customer Groups Inventoried.

BOARD'S PLANNING PROCESS

The Board's planning process parallels the biennial appropriations cycle. As the agency begins the cycle with the Strategic Plan and then the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR), the Board's staff assesses changes in its environment and their effects on current and future resource needs. The Board normally meets three times per year, in February, June and October. Board staff present basic policy issues to be considered for the Strategic Plan. The agency's Strategic Plan and topics to be included in the LAR will be submitted to the board at their June 2006 meeting for approval.

During the biennium, at each Board meeting, the Board is routinely kept updated and informed by the Executive Director on progress or plans, budgetary and operational issues. Policy and budgetary matters are addressed, and staff make the corresponding operational and budgetary changes. The process is repeated at each meeting during the year

TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS



FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF OUTCOMES

OUTCOME	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Percent of licensees with no recent violations	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Percent of complaints resulting in disciplinary action	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%
Recidivism rate for those receiving disciplinary action	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Percent of documented complaints resolved within six-months	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Recidivism rate for peer assistance programs	16%	16%	16%	16%	16%
On-year completion rate for peer assistance program	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%

TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS**PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEFINITIONS****LICENSING STRATEGY****OUTCOME MEASURE****1) Percent of Licensees with No Recent Violations**

Short Definition: The percent of the total number of licensed individuals at the end of the reporting period who have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years (three years total).

Purpose/Importance: Licensing individuals helps ensure that practitioners meet legal standards for professional education and practice, which is a primary agency goal. This measure is important because it indicates how effectively the agency's activities deter violations of professional standards established by statute and rule.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of licensing generates a report from the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS), which reflects the total number of veterinarians licensed as of the last day of the reporting period. The director of enforcement generates reports from VTS, which reflect the veterinarians who incurred violations by fiscal year for the current and previous two fiscal years. If a licensee has multiple violations within one fiscal year, the licensee is counted only once.

Method of Calculation: The total number of individuals currently licensed by the agency who have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years divided by the total number of individuals currently licensed by the agency. The numerator for this measure is calculated by subtracting the total number of licensees with violations during the three-year period from the total number of licensees at the end of the reporting period. The denominator is the total number of licensees at the end of the reporting period. The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of individuals licensed.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

2) Percent of Licensees Who Renew Online

Short Definition: Percentage of the total number of eligible licensed, registered, or certified individuals that renewed their license, registration, or certification during the period. Ineligible licensees are those whose license has expired and a late fee is due; licensees who have to renew but pay no fee such as military or retired practitioners; and licensees who wish to change their current status.

Purpose/Importance: To track use of online license renewal technology by the license population.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, a manually maintained spreadsheet, and a report which is automatically generated on a daily basis through a data file exchanges with the state's online. This report identifies individual's who paid their renewal fee the previous day via online access. The director of Licensing generates a computer listing which is then compared to the data received from the on-line vendor, the comptroller's report on money received and the spreadsheet.

Method of Calculation: The number of individual licenses, registration, or certifications renewed online divided by the total number of individual, registrations, or certifications renewed during the reporting period. The result should be multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of licensees who avail themselves of the renewal technology.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

3) Percent of New Individual Licenses Issued Online

Short Definition: Percent of all new eligible persons submitting application information and scheduling the licensing exam online during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: To track use of online license issuance technology by the licensee population

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, a manually maintained spreadsheet, and a report which is automatically generated on a daily basis through a data file exchange with the state's online. This report identifies individual's who paid their application fee the previous day via on-line access. The director of Licensing generates a computer listing which is then compared to the data received from the on-line vendor, the comptroller's report on money received and the spreadsheet.

Method of Calculation: The total number of new licenses, registrations, or certifications issued to individuals online divided by the total number of new licenses, registrations, or certifications issued to individuals during the reporting period. The result should be multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of individuals who avail themselves of the online technology

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: Yes

Desired Performance: Higher than target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals

Short Definition: The number of licenses issued to previously unlicensed individuals during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: A successful licensing structure must ensure that legal standards for professional education and practice are met prior to licensure. This measure is a primary workload indicator which is intended to show the number of unlicensed persons who were documented to have successfully met all licensure criteria established by statute and rule as verified by the agency during the reporting period.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, (VTS) that records those individuals newly licensed in the state. A paper copy of the logs listing the names of individuals newly licensed (as a regular or special licensee) during the reporting period is printed by the director of licensing. The number of regular licensees is added to the number of special licensees. The total is verified and the lists are maintained in the binder containing licensing performance report documentation. For the annual report, the number of licensees on the annual log is reconciled to the sum of the number of licenses issued each quarter.

Method of Calculation: This measure counts the total number of licensees issued to previously unlicensed individuals during the reporting period, regardless of when the application was originally received. Those individuals who had a license in the previous reporting period are not counted. Only new licenses are counted. Provisional licensees are not counted. Licenses are counted as new for persons who were previously licensed, but whose license was cancelled by authority of law or upon request. These licensees are required to meet all criteria of a new applicant.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of applicants for licensure or the pass rate of applicants on the exam.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

2) Number of Licenses Renewed (Individuals)

Short Definition: The number of licensed individuals who held licenses previously and renewed their license during the current reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: Licensure renewal is intended to ensure that persons who want to continue to practice in their respective profession satisfy current legal standards established by statute and rule for professional education and practice. This measure is intended to show the number of license renewals that were issued during the reporting period to individuals who currently held a valid license.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database. The director of licensing generates a paper copy of the log listing the names of all individuals whose license was renewed during the reporting period. The director reviews the list to identify any licensees who have renewed previously as inactive, military, or retired and subsequently change status. The list is marked accordingly to designate those individuals and they are not counted again. After this adjustment, the total number of names shown on the list is counted and recorded on the paper copy by the director of licensing. The list is maintained in the binder containing licensing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: The measure is calculated by querying the agency licensing database to produce a list containing the names of individuals who have renewed their licenses during the previous reporting period. Deduct the number of individuals on the report who have renewed previously as inactive, military, or retired and subsequently changed status, since they have been counted previously. For the annual report, the number of licensees on the annual list is reconciled to the sum of the number of licenses renewed each quarter. With the exception of deducting the “duplicate”, or status change renewals, this is automated and the system does the calculations.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of licensees who choose to renew or not renew their Texas license.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

3) Number of Individuals Examined

Short Definition: The number of individuals to whom examinations were administered in whole or in part during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: This measure shows the number of individuals examined which is a primary step in licensing the individual and represents a major cost element for the agency. Examination preparation, grading and notification costs are directly related to this measure.

Source/Collection of Data: This information comes from the licensing database, which produces lists of individuals who have taken the state board exam, special license exam, and exam for provisional licensure during the reporting period. The director of licensing queries the database to obtain this information and verifies it.

Method of Calculation: The measure is calculated by querying the agency licensing database to produce lists containing the names of individuals who have taken each type of examinations during the reporting period. The numbers of individuals taking each type of exam are added together to calculate the total number of exams

administered. For an exam administered in one session, even if comprised of periods with breaks or on more than one day, the individuals attending the session are counted only once. An individual who attends two sessions for two exams are counted twice. For the annual report, the number of exams administered on the annual lists are reconciled to the sum of the number of exams administered each quarter.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of applicants to take examinations.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

1) Average Licensing Cost per Individual License Issued

Short definition: Total expenditures (including encumbrances) for direct licensing activities during the reporting period divided by the total number of individuals licensed during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: This measure is intended to show how cost-effectively the agency processes new and renewal license applications for individuals.

Source/Collection of Data: The number of new and renewed licenses is obtained from performance measurement data calculated for the reporting period. Cost data is compiled and verified by the fiscal officer. Expenditure data is retrieved from operating statements covering the reporting period produced from an internal accounting system, MIP. Encumbrances are added to expenditures to derive the total cost for the period. Cost reports are kept in the binder containing licensing performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total funds expended and encumbered during the reporting period for the processing of initial and renewed licenses for individuals are divided by the total number of initial and renewed licenses for individuals issued during the reporting period. Costs include a percentage of the salary of the director of licensing; a temporary employee during the renewal cycle, printing, hand lettering of licenses, postage, supplies, and other direct cost of issuing a license. Costs related to the examination function and indirect costs are excluded from this calculation. The total cost is divided by the total number of licenses issued. (The output measures "Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals" plus the "Number of Licenses Renewed".) For multiple reporting periods, year-to-date performance is calculated by adding costs related to license issuance for all reporting periods (numerator) and dividing by the number of licenses issued for all reporting periods (denominator).

Limitation of Data: Costs for goods or services for which an invoice has not yet been received may be estimated. Since the renewal cycle occurs in January and February of each year, but costs are incurred every quarter, average cost is meaningful on an annual basis only, not on a quarterly basis.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

2) Average Cost per Exam Administered

Short Definition: Total costs expended for examination activities during the reporting period divided by the total number of exams administered during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows how cost-effectively the agency administers exams.

Source/Collection of Data: The number of exams administered is obtained from performance measurement data calculated each quarter. Cost data is compiled and verified by the fiscal officer. Expenditure data is retrieved from operating statements covering the reporting period produced from an internal accounting system, MIP. Encumbrances are added to expenditures to derive the total cost for the period. Costs reports are kept in the binder containing performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total funds expended and encumbered during the reporting period for the administration of examinations, excluding examination development costs, divided by the total number of individuals to whom examinations were administered during the reporting period. Costs incurred in a different quarter from the exam session should be included in the report for the period in which the exam is given. Costs include a percentage of the salary of the director of licensing, compensatory per diem for board members to attend exam, travel for both staff and board members, printing of exams, room rental, grading, postage, miscellaneous supplies, and any other direct cost of administering exams. The total cost is then divided by the number of exams administered. For multiple reporting periods, year-to-date performance is calculated by adding costs related to examinations for all reporting periods (numerator) and dividing by the number of exams administered for all reporting periods (denominator).

Limitation of Data: Total expended for examination activities during the reporting period divided by the total number of exams administered during the reporting period. Since examinations are issued sporadically through the fiscal year, average cost is meaningful only on an annual basis, not on a quarterly basis.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

3) Percentage of New Individual Licenses Issued within Ten Days

Short Definition: The percentage of initial individual license applications that were processed during the reporting period within ten days measured from the time in days elapsed from receipt of the initial completed application until the date the license is mailed.

Purpose/Importance: This measures the ability of the agency to process new applications in a timely manner and its responsiveness to a primary constituent group.

Source/Collection of Data: Application for a new license is considered complete when all required elements have been provided to the agency, including exam grades and evidence of graduation. Applicants must take and pass the required exams prior to licensure. Data from the application is entered into VTS, including the date of receipt of the last element. At the time an individual's license is prepared for mailing, the date mailed is entered into VTS. A license is considered mailed on the date it is delivered to the mail room. The calculation is made using all regular and special licenses mailed during the reporting period; no sampling is used. Records are in the binder containing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: At the end of each reporting period, the director of licensing prints a report which shows for each license issued during the reporting period the number of calendar days which elapsed between receipt of the completed application and license mailing. The director verifies that the number of licenses issued is the same as in the performance measure "Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals." If there is a discrepancy, it is investigated and reconciled. The number of initial individual licenses which were mailed in ten calendar days or less from the date of initial application receipt is divided by the total number of individual licenses mailed during the reporting period. The resulting number is multiplied by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Data Limitations: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

4) Percentage of Individual License Renewals Issued within Seven Days

Short Definition: The percentage of individual license renewal applications that were processed during the reporting period within seven days of receipt, measured from the time in calendar days elapsed from receipt of the renewal application until the date the renewal license is mailed.

Purpose/Importance: This measures the ability of the agency to process renewal application in a timely manner and its responsiveness to a primary constituent group.

Source/Collection of Data: A renewal application is not considered complete until all required elements are correctly submitted. Data from the application is entered into VTS, including the date of receipt. When an individual's renewal certificate is prepared for mailing, the date mailed is entered into VTS. A license is considered mailed on the date it is delivered to the mail room. At the end of each reporting period, the director of licensing prints a report which shows for each individual license renewed the number of calendar days which elapsed between initial receipt and mailing of the renewal certificate. The calculation is made using all renewal certificates mailed during the reporting period; no sampling is used. The list is kept in the binder containing licensing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: The director verifies that the number of renewal licenses issued on the report is the same as in the performance measure "Number of Licenses Renewed (Individuals)." If there is a discrepancy, it is investigated and reconciled. The number of renewal licenses which were mailed in seven calendar days or less from the date of renewal application receipt is divided by the total number of renewal licenses mailed during the reporting period. The resulting number is multiplied by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Data Limitations: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

EXPLANATORY MEASURES

1) Total Number of Individuals Licensed

Short Definition: Total number of individuals licensed at the end of the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the total number of individual licenses currently issued which indicates the size of one of the agency's primary constituencies.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of licensing runs a report off the licensing database, the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS), on the last day of the reporting period which gives the total number of individuals licensed as of that date. Documentation is kept in the performance report binder.

Method of Calculation: The report gives the total number of individuals licensed by category (regular, inactive, special, provisional, retired, and military) on the last day of the reporting period. Licenses in delinquent status are included. The total number of licensees in each category are added to calculate the total of all licensees.

Data Limitations: This is a "snapshot" of licensees on the last day of the reporting period, not the total number of individuals who have been licensed during the year.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

2) Pass Rate

Short Definition: The percent of individuals to whom a whole examination, or segments of a multi-part examination, were administered during the reporting period who received a passing score.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the rate at which those examined passed. This is an important step in the licensing process and a low pass rate may represent unnecessarily restrictive licensure requirements or inadequate preparation by licensure applicants.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of licensing queries the agency data base, (VTS), for the examinations administered. A paper list is produced and the number of examinations administered during the reporting period is counted. The director verifies that the number of examinations administered during the reporting period is the same as in the performance measure "Number of Individuals Examined". If there is a discrepancy, it is investigated and reconciled. Then, the director of licensing queries the database for the examinations administered resulting in a score of 75 or higher. A paper list is produced and the number of examinations with a score of 75 or higher is counted and written on the list. The lists are kept in the binder containing licensing performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of individuals who passed the examination (numerator) is divided by the total number of individuals examined (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage. If two exams were given in the same reporting period, the total number of individuals passing the exam during the reporting period is divided by the total number of persons taking the exam during the reporting period. Persons taking the exam multiple times are counted each time they take the exam.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over applicant preparation for the examination.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

OUTCOME MEASURES

1) Percent of Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary Action

Short Definition: Percent of complaints which were resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the extent to which the agency exercises its disciplinary authority in proportion to the number of complaints received. It is important that both the public and licensees have an expectation that the agency will work to ensure fair and effective enforcement of the act and this measure seeks to indicate agency responsiveness to this expectation.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement runs a report off the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) which lists all the complaints resolved for the period. The report contains a category which lists all the complaints resulting in disciplinary actions (complaints closed to board order). The total number of complaints resolved and the complaints resulting in disciplinary actions are calculated by VTS and recorded on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action (numerator) is divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage. Disciplinary actions are contained in board orders, which may include reprimands, suspensions, probation, revocation, and/or fines on which the board has acted.

Data Limitations: When a disciplinary action resolves multiple complaints against one veterinarian, this figure is inflated. Also, resolution of a number of minor continuing education complaints can cause this figure to be inflated.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

2) Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action

Short Definition: The number of repeat offenders at the end of the reporting period as a percentage of all offenders during the most recent three-year period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show how effectively the agency enforces its regulatory requirements and prohibitions. It is important that the agency enforce its act and rules strictly enough to ensure consumers are protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical practice by the licensed professional.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement runs reports off the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) by fiscal year for the current and previous two fiscal years which show the disciplinary actions taken. If multiple disciplinary actions have been taken against one licensee within a fiscal year, the additional disciplinary actions are marked accordingly and deducted off the total number of disciplinary actions to reflect only the number of offenders. The number of licensees to whom disciplinary actions have been taken by fiscal year are added together to achieve the total. The reports are then reviewed and marked to identify licensees who have received disciplinary action in two or more years. The total number of individuals against whom two or more disciplinary actions have been taken within the current and preceding two fiscal years are noted on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of individuals against whom two or more disciplinary actions were taken by the board within the current and preceding two fiscal years (numerator) is divided by the total number of individuals receiving disciplinary actions within the current and preceding two fiscal years (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitation: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

3) Percent of Documented Complaints Resolved Within Six Months

Short Definition: The percent of complaints resolved during the reporting period that were resolved within a six month period from the time they were initially received by the agency.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the percentage of complaints which are resolved within a reasonable period of time. It is important to ensure the swift enforcement of the Veterinary Act which is an agency goal.

Source/Collection of Data: Complaints and date of receipt are entered into the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) upon receipt. A complaint is considered closed when the board takes final action on it, or when it is closed to no violation. The closing date is determined by the date final action is taken by the board or the date the determination is made that a violation did not occur. The closing date is entered into VTS. The director of enforcement runs a report off the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) which lists all the complaints resolved during the fiscal year with date of receipt, date of resolution, and number of calendar days to resolve each complaint. The total number of complaints resolved is calculated by VTS and recorded at the end of the report. The number of complaints resolved in 180 days or less is manually counted and written on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of complaints resolved within a period of six months or less from the date of receipt (numerator) is divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The board secretary (who is a practicing veterinarian) reviews cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by a board member who is not a full-time employee. Occasionally complaints are delayed many months and in a few cases more than a year pending the administrative hearing process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Also, the board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next board meeting.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of Compliance Inspections -

Short Definition: The number of compliance inspections conducted during a reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the workload involved in conducting routine inspections of veterinarians. This is also an educational program which serves to identify problems and thereby potentially reduce the number of complaints against veterinarians.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement maintains a log of all compliance inspections conducted. A count is taken of all compliance inspections conducted in the fiscal period. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of compliance inspections conducted during a reporting period. In instances of multiple licensees in a practice, the number of inspections is determined by the number of licensees in a practice.

Data Limitations: The number of compliance inspections conducted is limited by the amount of travel budget available. Also, many compliance inspections can be conducted in a short time within an urban area, where multiple veterinarians practice within one clinic and clinics are geographically located in close proximity. However, in a rural area, where there are many sole practitioners and distances between clinics are geographically further apart, fewer compliance inspections can be conducted.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

2) Number of Complaints Resolved

Short Definition: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the workload associated with resolving complaints.

Source/Collection of Data: Complaints are entered into the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) upon receipt. A complaint is considered resolved when final action is taken by the board or for which a determination is made that a violation did not occur. The closing date is entered into VTS. The director of enforcement runs a report off the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS) which lists all the complaints resolved during the fiscal year. The total number of complaints resolved is calculated by VTS and recorded at the end of the report. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints during the reporting period upon which final action was taken by the board or for which a determination is made that a violation did not occur. A complaint that, after preliminary investigation, is determined to be non-jurisdictional is not a resolved complaint. The number of resolved complaints is calculated by VTS and reflected on the last page of the report.

Data Limitations: The board secretary (who is a practicing veterinarian) reviews cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by a board member, not a full-time employee. Occasionally complaints are delayed many months and in a few cases more than a year pending the administrative hearing process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Also, the board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next board meeting.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

1) Average Time for Complaint Resolution

Short Definition: The average length of time to resolve a complaint, for all complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the agency's efficiency in resolving complaints.

Source/Collection of Data: Dates of receipt and dates of resolution are entered into the Veterinary Tracking System (VTS). The director of enforcement runs a report off (VTS) which records all the complaints resolved during the reporting period, the total number of calendar days during the reporting period associated with those complaints, and the total number of complaints resolved. VTS calculates the average number of days per complaint resolved and that is recorded at the end of the computer report. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation. The data is stored on VTS.

Method of Calculation: The total number of calendar days to resolve all complaints closed during the reporting period (numerator) divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator).

Data Limitations: The board secretary (who is a practicing veterinarian) reviews cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by a non full-time employee. Occasionally complaints are delayed many months and in a few cases more than a year pending the administrative hearing process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Also, the board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next board meeting.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

2) Average Cost per Complaint Resolved

Short Definition: Total costs expended for the resolution of complaints during the reporting period divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the cost efficiency of the agency in resolving a complaint.

Source/Collection of Data: The number of complaints resolved is obtained from performance measurement data calculated for the reporting period. Cost data is compiled and verified by the fiscal officer. Expenditure data is retrieved from operating statements covering the reporting period from an internal accounting system, MIP. Encumbrances are added to expenditures to derive the total cost for the period. Costs reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total funds expended and encumbered during the reporting period for complaint processing, investigation, and resolution (numerator) is divided by the number of complaints resolved (denominator). Costs include expenditures and encumbrances for the following categories: a percentage of investigators' and investigative assistant's salaries, a percentage of the attorney's salary, compensatory per diem for the board secretary to review cases and attend investigative conferences, travel, legal services from the attorney general, if applicable, services of administrative law judges from the State Office of Administrative Hearings, if applicable, court costs, court reporter fees, depositions, witness fees, expert witness fees, subpoenas, postage, supplies, and any other direct costs of conducting an investigation or resolving a complaint. Indirect costs are

excluded from this calculation. Any encumbrances, which are not on MIP, are added manually. For multiple reporting periods, year-to-date performance is calculated by adding costs related to complaint resolution for all reporting periods (numerator) and dividing by the number of complaints resolved for all reporting periods (denominator).

Data Limitations: Costs for goods or services for which an invoice has not yet been received may be estimated. Average cost of complaint resolution varies widely depending on method of resolution. Complaints which are resolved by disciplinary hearings incur more expenses and therefore cost much more than complaints closed through agreed board orders.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

EXPLANATORY MEASURES

1) Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received

Short Definition: The total number of complaints received during the reporting period which are within the agency's jurisdiction of statutory responsibility.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the number of jurisdictional complaints which helps determine agency workload.

Source/Collection of Data: When a complaint is received, it is entered into a manual log. Complaints are numbered sequentially within a fiscal year. (Example: 02-001, 02-002, etc.) The director of enforcement counts the number of complaints received during the reporting period and notes the total on a copy of the log. This copy is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints received during the reporting period. This does not include complaints, that upon preliminary investigation, are determined to be non-jurisdictional. The agency generally accepts written complaints only.

Data Limitations: The board has no control over the number of complaints received.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

2) Number of Disciplinary Hearings

Short Definition: The number of hearings held before an administrative law judge, SOAH, during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: This measure shows the workload associated with resolving complaints which are resolved by a hearing before an administrative law judge and is an indication of the resources required to resolve complaints in this manner.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement gathers this data manually. A copy of the documentation is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of hearings held before an administrative law judge, SOAH, during the reporting period. Temporary suspension hearings are included. If multiple veterinarians are involved in one hearing before an ALJ, then the number of veterinarians is reported.

Data Limitations: This process can be fairly lengthy due to continuances granted to the defendant and workload of the State Office of Administrative Hearings. The hearing may be held in a subsequent fiscal year than the complaint was initially investigated. Occasionally complaints are delayed many months and in a few cases more than a year pending the administrative hearing process.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

PEER ASSISTANCE STRATEGY

OUTCOME MEASURES

4) Recidivism Rate for Peer Assistance Programs

Short Definition: The percentage of individuals who receive related disciplinary action within three years of completion of the peer assistance program.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the three-year recidivism rate for those individuals who have been through the peer assistance program. It is important because it indicates the extent that consumers are being protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical veterinary practice as a result of participating in the peer assistance program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. Agency staff does not have access to any of the participant files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. The program administrator provides participant completion dates. The peer assistance contact on staff (an investigator) provides the names of licensees who have had disciplinary actions imposed which were related to substance abuse. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. A spreadsheet is maintained by the fiscal officer which shows historical data. Data includes the date of program completion for each participant by case number and any related disciplinary action by fiscal year. Based on this information, the fiscal officer calculates the recidivism rate. The reporting forms and spreadsheet are kept in the binders containing peer assistance performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: Of all individuals successfully completing the program in fiscal X-3 (where X is the current fiscal year), the percent of individuals receiving related disciplinary action from the board anytime between the beginning of fiscal year X-3 and the end of fiscal year X (i.e., the current fiscal year).

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over participants who relapse. In addition, the number of participants in the program is relatively small. Individuals must sign a contract to participate for a minimum of two years. Therefore, a very small number of participants complete the program each year. Consequently, the relapse of one person can produce a large percentage change.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

5) One-year Completion Rate for Peer Assistance Program

Short Definition: Percent of individuals who participated in the peer assistance program during the year prior to the reporting period and have not relapsed during the one year period.

Purpose/Importance: This measure is important because it indicates the extent that consumers are being protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical veterinary practice as a result of participating in the peer assistance program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. Agency staff does not have access to any of the participant files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. When a participant enters the program, the program administrator provides the entrance date, which is the date the participant signs the contract. For each reporting

period, the program administrator identifies any participants who have suffered relapses and the relapse date. A relapse is defined as any use of mood-altering substances. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. Historical data is maintained on a spreadsheet. Based on the information given by the program administrator, the fiscal officer calculates the one-year completion rate. The reporting forms and spreadsheet are kept in the binder containing peer assistance performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: Of all individuals who participated in the peer assistance program in fiscal year X-1 (where X is the current fiscal year), the percent who have successfully participated in the program for one year with no relapses. Numerator: Participants in the program in X-1 who have not suffered a relapse. Denominator: Participants participating in the program in X-1. The numerator is divided by the denominator and result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over participants who relapse. With so few participants in the program, the relapse of one person can produce a large percentage change.

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of Licensed Individuals Participating in a Peer Assistance Program

Short Definition: The number of licensed individuals who participated in a peer assistance program sponsored by the agency during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows licensed individuals who continue to practice in their respective field who are participating in a substance abuse program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc.). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. The program administrator provides the data regarding participants for the reporting period. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. The fiscal officer calculates the number of licensed individuals participating in the program each reporting period. The reporting forms are kept in the binder containing peer assistance performance report documentation..

Method of Calculation: The total number of all licensees who participated in the program at some point during the reporting period. Participants are individuals who have signed a contract to participate and are subject to ongoing monitoring requirements. Participants who have not yet signed a contract are not counted. Contracts are normally written for a two year period. Occasionally, the program administrator will extend the participant's contract (prior to expiration) beyond the initial two year period. In this case, the original case number is maintained and the individual is not counted again. Occasionally, a participant successfully completes the program and subsequently re-enters after a lapse of time. In this case, a new case number is assigned and the individual is treated as a new participant.

Data Limitations: Persons who are served before signing a contract are not counted. Involvement in the program customarily begins with intervention, then usually proceeds to in-patient treatment. Only after an individual has completed treatment does he or she sign a peer assistance contract. Many hours of service take place in the preliminary process prior to the signing of a contract. Also, since the first quarter of each fiscal year includes the number of participants carried forward from the previous fiscal year, the number of participants is heavily weighted in that quarter.

Calculation: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

Texas State Board Of Veterinary Medical Examiners



Workforce Plan

June 2006

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OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners was created in 1911 by the 32nd Legislature and charged with regulating the practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and dentistry. As the years have passed, different legislative bodies have refined the Board's responsibilities and authority. The Board's current enabling legislation is located in Chapter 801, Texas Occupations Code.

Agency Mission

The mission of the Board is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary services for the people of Texas.

Agency Programs

Today, the Board's primary program responsibilities include Licensing and Examination, Enforcement, and Peer Assistance.

Licensing and Examination

The Licensing and Examination division is charged with ensuring that only those persons who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed the minimum qualifications required to be a licensed veterinarian in the state of Texas enter the practice and provide veterinary services to Texas' citizens. The Board is also responsible for renewing the more than 6,900 licenses currently held by practitioners, and for collecting fees associated with the licensing and examination functions.

Through its licensing and examination efforts, the Board collected in excess of 1.9 million for FY2005. This amount includes fees collected for Peer Assistance, application and exam fees, and licensing and license renewal fees. Also included in the total revenue collected is a \$200 professional tax for most licenses issued or renewed.

Enforcement

The enforcement program is designed to protect consumers of veterinary services and ensure veterinarians comply with the Veterinary Licensing Act through the investigation of complaints and compliance inspections as well as the investigation of the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

The legislature has granted the Board authority to utilize many tools for the enforcement efforts. Those tools include the ability to refuse to examine an applicant; suspension, probation or revocation of a license; issue reprimands, require the make up of missed continuing education and/or requiring additional continuing education; impose administrative penalties; and hold settlement conferences concerning alleged violations of the Act.

Peer Assistance

The Peer Assistance program assists veterinarians and veterinary students who are impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness.

The program, authorized by Chapter 467 of the Health and Safety Code, is administered under contract through the Texas Veterinary Medical Association and is approved by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Our Compact with Texans

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is the State's agency that regulates the practice of veterinary medicine by licensing and regulating veterinarians. It also takes action against non-licensed persons who violate the Veterinary Licensing Act by practicing without a license. The Board and its staff are committed to excellence in their service to the public and the veterinary profession. The Board's first priority is to protect the public. It must maintain high standards for veterinarians who seek licensure in Texas and those who are already in practice. The Board also has a commitment to its licensees to keep them informed about the law, its rules, and related information.

All individuals who contact the Board can expect:

- Easy access to agency services;
- Consumer friendly processes;

- Agency staff that are courteous, knowledgeable, and responsive to their needs;
- Answers to questions and requests for information provided in a timely manner; and
- Services provided in an efficient manner that meets the customer's needs and yet remains fiscally responsible.

I. AGENCY STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Agency Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal: To establish and implement reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigate complaints, and enforce Chapter 801, Texas Occupations Code, to ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas.

Objective: To operate a licensure system that will assure that 100 percent of all veterinarians meet minimum licensure standards.

Strategy: Operate an effective and comprehensive veterinary licensure program to include initial licensure by examination and ongoing renewal of licenses.

Objective: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules; conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules; and provide a peer assistance program to licensed professionals who are impaired because of chemical dependency.

Strategy: To investigate all complaints received within strategy guidelines and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules and conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules.

Strategy: Identify, refer, and assist veterinarians whose practice is impaired because of chemical dependency or mental health issues.

Anticipated Changes to Strategies

The Board anticipates many changes over the coming years due to changes within veterinary medicine, technology, reduced funding levels, an increase in licensees and an increase in complaints received. These changes will present challenges that the Board will endeavor to meet.

The Board has historically seen an increase in licensees each fiscal year. Additionally, the number of complaints received by the board, while fluid, has consistently risen over the years. These trends toward increased workloads will require adjustments in the agency's business processes and additional staff in order to meet the needs of our customers and strategic requirements.

As our world becomes more technology driven, the Board will continue to make adjustments to accommodate such changes, including an increasing number of licensees renewing on-line and the need to provide more consumer information on the agency's website.

Budget/Financial Forecasts

Due to budget cuts experienced over the last four years and the rising cost of doing business, the Board continues to look for innovative ways to meet basic needs for both staff and agency customers.

Severe budget constraints have impacted the agency negatively in the area of workforce. Negative impacts include a position not currently classified at the correct job classification level and a lack of funding available to provide rewards to agency staff who work hard to ensure the agency's ability to meet strategic requirements and customer needs, and impedes the agency's ability to attract qualified staff when vacancies occur.

In an effort to improve the agency's ability to attract and retain qualified staff, the board will seek additional funding during the next Legislative session. These funds will be utilized to ensure that all staff are compensated at a level appropriate to their work, provide incentives to current staff through the

provision of merit increases and other employee rewards, as well as attract and retain qualified staff as needed.

Anticipated Legislative Changes

During the upcoming Legislative session, the board anticipates several changes that will impact its ability to meet strategic requirements and serve its customers.

Members of the 79th Legislature considered the matter of equine dentistry and the practice of veterinary medicine without a license. These subjects will be addressed again during the upcoming session. In recent hearings, legislators have discussed adding the regulation of equine dentistry to the board's responsibilities as well as additional resources to combat unlicensed practice. While the board welcomes these additions, it is important to note that without additional funding and staff to complete the needed functions, the board will not be able to successfully meet legislative expectations and continue to provide valuable, cost effective services to our customers.

Scope of Workforce Plan

This Workforce Plan will address areas most critical to meeting agency strategic requirements and customer needs, and ensuring the agency's compliance with the State Classification Plan.

II. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Current Workforce

The board's current workforce consists 10 full time positions and one part time position. Classifications include:

- Executive Director
- Executive Assistant
- Attorney VI
- Manager III
- Investigator V (3)
- Program Specialist III
- Administrative Assistant II (2)
- Accountant V

Critical Workforce Skills

There are numerous skills necessary for successful completion of the agency's core functions. These skills include:

- Executive Level Management
- Customer Service
- Investigative
- Analysis/Research
- Mediation/Arbitration
- Communication (Oral and Written)
- Legal Experience
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- State Budgeting/Governmental Fund Accounting
- Advanced Computer Skills
- Business Office Management
- Computer Skills (skill requirements range from entry-level to highly-skilled information technology specialists)

Workforce Demographics

As of April 30, 2006, the Board had a total headcount of 11 employees. The agency is authorized to have a total of 10.8 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The following tables profile the agency's workforce as of April 30, 2006, and include both full-time and part-time employees.

Gender		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
Male	7	64%
Female	4	36%

Age		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
30 – 39 years	3	28%
40 – 49 years	3	27%
50 – 59 years	2	18%
60 – 69 years	3	27%

State Tenure		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
0-5 years	1	9%
6-10 years	3	27%
11-15 years	2	18%
16-20 years	2	18%
21-25 years	0	0%
26-30 years	1	9%
36-40 years	2	18%

Agency Tenure		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
0-5 years	3	27%
6-10 years	5	46%
11-15 years	2	18%
16-20 years	1	9%

Workforce As Compared With Statewide Civilian Workforce

The following table compares the Board's percentage of African American, Hispanic and Female employees (as of April 30, 2006) to the statewide civilian workforce as reported by the Texas Commission on Human Rights.

Job Category	African American		Hispanic American		Female	
	Board%	State%	Board%	State%	Board%	State%
Officials/Administrators	0%	5%	0%	8%	33%	26%
Professionals	0%	7%	0%	7%	17%	44%
Administrative Support	0%	16%	0%	17%	100%	84%

The Board is under-represented in all of the African American and Hispanic categories as well as in the Professional category for females. Because the Board has a small number of staff, only 11 FTEs, and maintains a small budget, \$601,049 for FY2006 and \$601,954 for FY2007, the Board faces many challenges in attracting a diverse group of applicants from which to choose the most qualified applicants when vacancies arise. A small staff means that vacancies are infrequent and promotional opportunities are very limited. A small budget limits the Board in its competitiveness with larger entities and its ability to

recruit entry-level personnel because the Board has to seek staff who have already developed skills and funds are limited for staff development.

The Board continues to utilize as many tools as possible to seek a diverse applicant pool, including advertising with Work In Texas, a web based job board with the Texas Workforce Commission, providing copies of announcements for all positions to be filled externally to minority and women's organizations, and, when funding is available, placing advertisements in local newspapers. The Board has developed a Recruitment Plan, that is utilized and updated as necessary to address the deficiencies.

Employee Turnover

The Board's turnover rate remains significantly lower than the overall State average. Turnover experienced by the board can be attributed to salary dissatisfaction, increased workload as a result of legislative initiatives, and an increasing licensee base, and lack of advancement opportunities. In past years, the Board has been able to utilize merit increases, one-time merits and other retention tools to encourage employees to remain with the Board. While the Legislature has provided sufficient tools for the attraction and retention of highly qualified employees, the lack of funding has not allowed the agency to utilize them.

Following is a chart that shows the Board's turnover rate as compared to the overall State turnover for FY1999 - 2005.

Fiscal Year	TBVME	State
2005	0%	16.6%
2004	9%	14.8%
2003	11.4%	17.4%
2002	11.4%	14.8%
2001	11.1%	17.6%
2000	40%	18.9%
1999	0%	17.6%

Employee Attrition – Retirement

The Board currently has 2 employees who will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years, one in 2006 and one in 2009, representing 18% of the Board's workforce. In addition, the Board currently employs 4 return-to-work retirees, 36.5% of its workforce. This means that the Board is at risk of losing 54.6% of its workforce over the next 5 years. The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise within the agency, coupled with normal attrition, poses a critical workforce dilemma for the Board as well as the state.

To combat the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise as these employees leave the agency, the Board continues to document job procedures and agency history. The Board will also continue to cross train its employees to allow for a smoother transition as employees leave.

Agency Workforce Needs – Expected Workforce Changes

- Attrition through retirement;
- Increased need for additional staff due to changes in workload;
- Increased use of technology to revise and streamline work processes; and
- Greater demand for web-related services;

Anticipated Program and Workload Changes and Shortfalls

Enforcement

Veterinary medicine is an ever-changing field. With constant advances in medical technology and changes in treatment protocols, the demands placed on veterinarians are increasing by leaps and bounds. In addition, individuals are beginning to see themselves as guardians of animals instead of owners, placing more emphasis on the emotional attachment to animals and opening the door to more litigation and more complaints. As a result of these changes, the number of complaints received by the

board has increased. From fiscal year 1999 to fiscal year 2005, the agency has seen an overall increase of 47.25% in the number of complaints received. The agency anticipates an additional increase of 20.4% for fiscal year 2006.

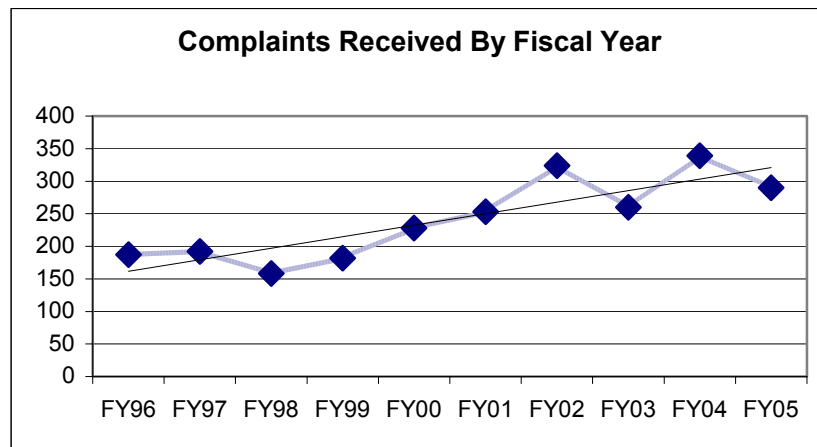
Each individual investigator has a responsibility to investigate a complaint by contacting both the complainant and the responding licensee, gathering information relating to the complaint including patient records and other documentation from both parties to support their argument and obtaining second opinions from veterinarians not connected to the case. In order to allow the board to make a fair decision, investigators are required to delve into medical matters and understand medical processes and terminology to allow them to write comprehensive, informative reports of investigation that are then sent, along with supporting documentation, for medical review. They also attend informal settlement conferences to provide information to the enforcement committee and answer questions. In addition to the investigation of complaints, board investigators complete special investigation as needed and spend one to two hours per day on the phone answering questions relating to the laws and rules that govern veterinary medicine.

Unlike most medical professions, veterinarians purchase and maintain dangerous drugs and controlled substances inventories within their practices. Prior to FY2003, the agency completed on-site compliance inspections. These on-site inspections allowed investigators to ensure that these controlled substances were maintained and utilized in a manner consistent with applicable laws and rules, review patient and continuing education records and gave licensees direct, one-on-one contact with the board. This contact gave the licensee a chance to ask questions and the opportunity to see that the board, while a regulatory entity, was not out to make their lives difficult. On-site inspections also allowed the board an opportunity to keep up-to-date on the workings of a veterinary practice. The board ceased conducting on-site compliance inspections due to budget cuts in FY2003.

The agency went through Sunset review during the last legislative session. The review resulted in the addition of several responsibilities to the agency, including conducting continuing education documentation reviews of licensees during license renewal. Due to the magnitude of the task and the limited number of staff within the licensing and examination division, the agency assigned this task to agency investigators. The agency conducts these reviews through by mail compliance inspections, selecting a percentage of licensees quarterly who are contacted and asked to provide CE documentation, along with copies of patient records and controlled substance documentation. This requires a significant amount of investigator time and involves preparing and mailing correspondence to the selected licensees, tracking licensee response, sending second requests, reviewing submitted material, corresponding with licensees regarding the findings, and opening disciplinary actions against those veterinarians found to be in violation of board rules.

The amount of hours required to complete these tasks increases in accordance with the number of complaints received by the board and will increase significantly if the board is given the responsibility of regulating equine dentistry.

Investigators also complete a significant amount of administrative functions such as answering the agency's main phone line, entering data into the agency's database, typing correspondence, mass mailings to licensees, and filing.



Legal

Prior to FY1996, resolution time for complaints was impacted by not only the need for additional agency staff, but by the agency's need to depend on a representative from the Office Of Attorney General for legal support. The attorneys in the OAG were extremely busy and suffered from large backlogs of work. This caused complaint resolution times to soar and created dissatisfaction with both the complainant and the responding licensee as the process dragged on. In FY1996, the agency added a three-quarter-time attorney position to its staff. The position was shared with the Optometry Board. In 1999, the position began supporting only TBVME. The position is responsible for representing the agency in informal settlement conferences and State Office of Administrative Hearings procedures as well as writing disciplinary actions and rules, and providing legal counsel to board members, the agency's executive director, and agency staff in general with regard to agency business.

With the emphasis placed on individuals as guardians to animals rather than as owners, increases in complaints received by the board, and the increasing trend of responding veterinarians utilizing legal counsel, the current part time position has become overwhelmed by its workload. The agency's customers would be better served by placing the clerical tasks attendant to this position with an administrative assistant, freeing the attorney's time to complete tasks more in line with their training and experience and by moving this position from part time to full time.

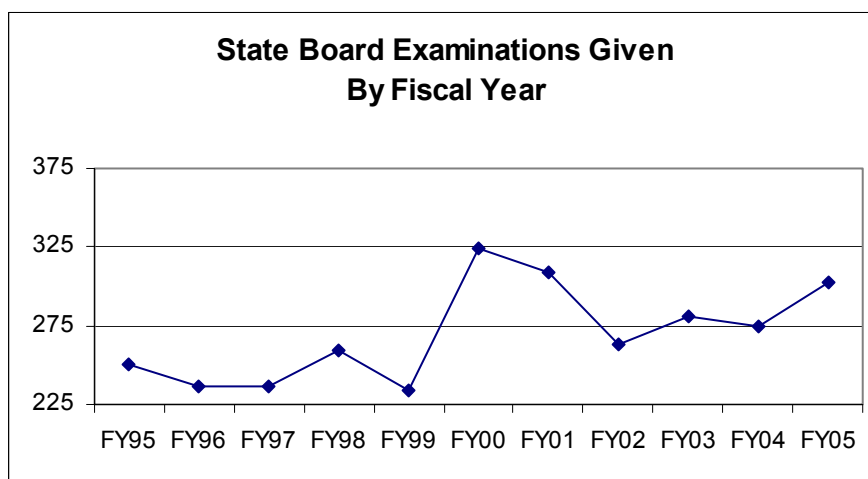
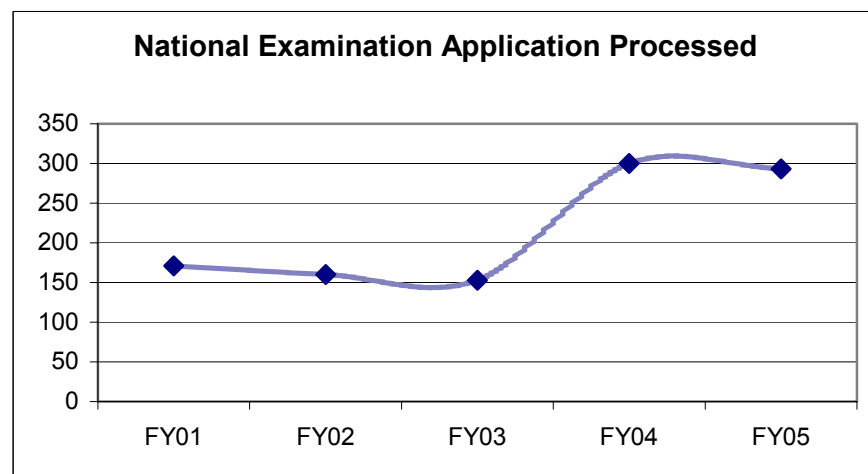
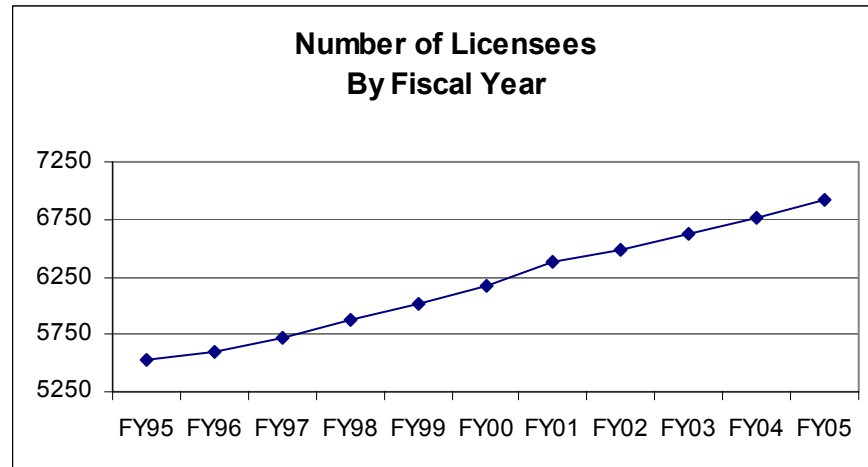
Licensing and Examination

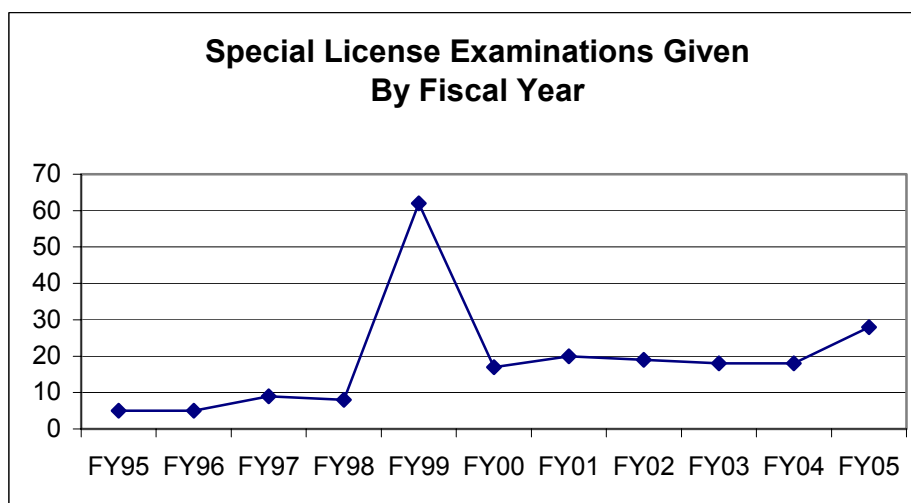
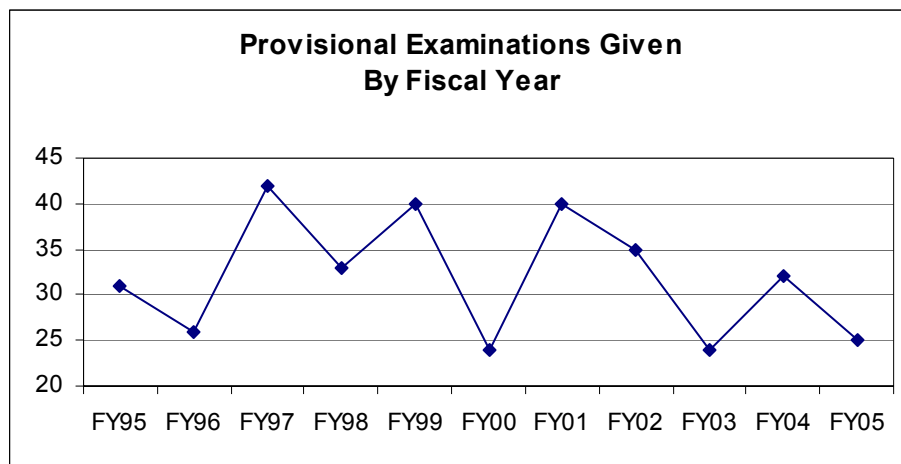
The agency currently has one-and-one half FTEs operating its licensing and examination program. Prior to 2001, one FTE operated the program. During the 76th session, Legislators added half of an FTE to the agency's staff. This allowed the agency to turn a part time position that was supporting the Fiscal division into a full time position that was split between Fiscal and Licensing and Examination.

The licensing and examination division is responsible for administering the State Board Examination, the Provisional and Special License examinations, issuing licenses to qualified individuals who apply for a State of Texas veterinary license, and annual renewal of each license. From FY2000 to FY2005, the agency's licensee base increased by 15%.

In addition to the increase in licensees and renewals processed, the licensing and examination division also began processing applications for the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) in FY2001. This is a national examination taken by all individuals who have graduated from an approved college of veterinary medicine or who have graduated from a foreign school and have obtained certification through the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) or the Program for Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) programs. This process entails receiving applications as well as collecting and reviewing documentation to support the individual's eligibility to take the examination. In addition, the division also corresponds with the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME), the entity responsible for administering the NAVLE, regarding qualified individuals and testing scores. Testing scores are provided to the board, which in turn notifies examinees.

The board anticipates the addition of regulatory responsibilities for equine dentistry. This addition will greatly increase the responsibilities of the division staff.





Future Workforce Skills Needed

With the evolution of veterinary medicine, an increasingly mobile licensee base, changes in business processes, and the continued need for strong leadership, the agency anticipates a greater need in the following skills:

- Leadership;
- Critical thinking;
- Problem solving;
- Communication;
- Change management;
- Expanded technological; and
- Advanced time management.

The continued development of these skills within agency staff will enable the agency to successfully complete its mission in the coming years.

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Skills

Based on the agency's workforce analysis, the follow issues must be addressed:

- Because the agency's Executive Director is a return-to-work retiree, the agency stands to lose valuable institutional knowledge and leadership that is key to the agency's success when this employee leaves. Consequently, the loss of these mission critical skills could impact the agency's ability to successfully meet its obligations.
- The agency's Licensing and Examination division consist of 1.5 FTEs. The Licensing and Examination Director has been with the agency for 18 years and is eligible to retire in 2009. The administrative

support person who supports this division half time is a return-to-work retiree. This means that by the year 2009, the division may have lost both employees who make up the division.

- Because the agency has been unable to hire a more diverse workforce, the agency may lack the innovative ideas that a wide variety of workers can provide.

Immediate Agency Staffing Needs

To allow the board to continue to meet its strategic responsibilities and provide its customers with the best possible service, the board will address the following staffing needs with the 80th Legislature:

- *Administrative Assistant* – The agency will seek an additional Administrative Assistant position to support the agency's attorney and complete general support functions such as answering the agency's main telephone line and providing additional support agency wide where needed. This will allow the agency to move an administrative assistant as full time support for the agency's enforcement division, relieving investigators of the need to complete administrative support functions and giving them greater latitude for investigating complaints, completing special investigations and compliance inspections. Additionally, as the agency's licensee base increases, the position could also support the agency's fiscal division, allowing the agency to move an administrative assistant to full time support of the licensing and examination division.
- *Investigator position* – The agency will seek an additional investigator position. With the rise in the number of complaints received by the agency, the addition of conducting compliance audits by mail, and the need to investigate unlicensed practice, the agency's current investigative staff is not sufficient to handle the growing workload and still meet reasonable resolution times on complaints.
- *Investigator position, Contingent* – If the legislature adds regulation of equine dentistry to the agency's responsibilities, an additional investigator will be required to handle the increased workload.
- *Part-time to full-time Attorney position* – The agency will request that the agency's staff attorney position be made full-time. With the increase in complaints received, the increasing number of veterinarians utilizing legal counsel in disciplinary actions, and the possible addition of equine dentistry, the current part-time position is not sufficient to meet the agency's needs.

Staff Reclassification Needed

During the last legislative session, the State's classification system was revised to delete the Program Administrator series. As a result, the agency's Director of Licensing and Examination had to be reclassified in the Program Specialist series. Due to budget constraints, the position was classified as a Program Specialist V position. Because the position functions as a director by administering the licensing and examination program, the position should have been classified as a Program Specialist VI. The agency will seek funding to bring the position in line with the appropriate classification.

III. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

While the Board faces many challenges in its workforce over the next five years, most can be addressed by the following objectives:

Objective: Obtain additional staff necessary to successfully meet agency strategic responsibilities.

Action Steps

- Identify staffing deficiencies;
- Seek FTEs and funding from the Legislature; and
- Hire appropriate staff.

Objective: Adjustments to current employment placement within the State's compensation schedule.

Action Steps:

- Identify staff inappropriately placed within the State's compensation schedule; and
- Seek funding to allow for appropriate placement.

Objective: Continue to Develop and Document Job Procedures

By continuing to develop and document job procedures, the Board can build a library of resource material for its future workforce. This action will effectively reduce the "brain drain" that will happen as experienced workers leave the agency.

Action Steps

- Identify undocumented procedures;
- Provide guidance to staff on process documentation techniques;
- Ensure sufficient available time to allow staff to complete the documentation process; and
- Include the protection of completed job procedure documentation in the agency's Business Continuity Plan.

Objective Continue Seeking Diversity Within the Applicant Pool and the Agency's Workforce.

By continuing to seek a diverse applicant pool that includes all qualified individuals, the agency can build a resource of individuals with a wide range of ideas and experience. These attributes can better help the agency to deal with changes in workload and challenges as responsibilities are added.

Action Steps

- Continue to identify and refine ways to attract a more diverse pool of applicants;
- Continue to hire the most qualified applicants; and
- Continue to identify ways to retain those qualified individuals.

Objective: Develop a competent, well-trained workforce.

It is imperative that the agency continue to cross train all agency employees to ensure that agency processes are not disrupted as employees leave. The agency should provide training to its employees whenever possible, utilizing both free and low cost training. This measure will ensure that, where possible, current employees will have opportunities for advancement, thereby increasing the agency's retention ability and that new technologies will be added to the agency's repertoire.

Action Steps

- Identify agency critical skills and competencies with input from divisions;
- Assess the level of risk facing the agency regarding the potential loss of knowledge and focus training efforts in those areas; and
- Expand and enhance staff development to include effective leadership and mentoring as well as assessing and addressing division specific training needs.

Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Information Resources Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The information resource goals of the agency are consistent with the agency's overall strategic plan and include the on-going review of the agency's overall operations to determine if additional or updated information resources are necessary to continue to regulate effectively in the public interest and pursue the securing of the necessary resources. These goals support the Statewide Strategic Plan for Information Resources as outline by the Texas Department of Information Resources.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Programs

All automated information is maintained, secured and located in the Board office on a Local Area Network (LAN) server that utilizes Microsoft Windows 2003 for file sharing, database hosting, data backup, and secure user authorization. The Board currently contracts IT support and resources via an interagency contract through the Health Professions Council using its ITSS service. This service includes desktop user support, server support, web development, email support, internet access support, IT purchase consultation, and IT strategic planning. The agency's internet access and email accounts are supplied by the Department of Information Resources (DIR). This provides the agency access to USPS, USAS, ERS, LBB and ABEST.

The agency's website is hosted, published and maintained by ITSS. It has been a successful endeavor to bring web publishing in-house, rather than having it maintained and housed by Bearing Point, formerly KPMG. This change has allowed the agency to update the website in a timely manner, have full content control and include the use of web-based applications that better serve our external customers.

The website is constructed and maintained in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act, and in the spirit of "open government". Furthermore, our website abides by all statutory requirements required by Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 10, Chapter 206, Subchapter B. This chapter and subchapter discusses privacy policies, security policies, linking policies, website accessibility, and general website regulations.

Publications on our website include, but are not limited to, agency information, licensing examination dates, verification of veterinarian information, disciplinary actions, access to complaint forms, agency newsletters, continuing education information, laws and statutes, as well as links to other agencies related to the Board and its mission.

The Board strives to increase cross-government and interagency activities and public services while maintaining a return on investment with existing equipment and software that service the Board's internal and external customers. Consumers and members of the profession, as well as other state agencies welcome the opportunity to access this information and communication through current technology.

Funding is a continuous challenge. It is our goal to maintain, at a bare minimum, IT services for file, database and web services, allow for expansion and efficient management with existing equipment and software, and expand future services with the aid of new technology purchases.

Agency Databases and Applications

The agency maintains two major databases. The application software and data is owned by the agency; however, the specific code necessary to customize the application is owned by the state approved programmer contracted by the agency.

Name: Veterinary Tracking System

Acronym: VTS

Description: VTS is the agency's primary licensing and regulatory database maintained on the LAN system. MS Access97 has been customized for functionality and division specific needs to comply with state mandated reporting of key measure, sharing of data with other state agencies to facilitate crime records checks, student loan and child support defaulters, as well customer specific open records requests.

Size: The current size of VTS is 23MB[NP1]. Even with growth within the next 5 years, it is anticipated that its storage capacity will not exceed 1.5 GB[NP2].

GIS: This database does not support or contain GIS spatial operations/data.

Sharing: Portions of the database are formatted and downloaded to a disk and made available to the DPS crime records unit, narcotics registration unit, AG's child support division and TGSL as required by various statutes.

Future: The agency is currently testing an upgraded version of the database and its functions for further automation. Additional hardware may be required to plan for growth, additional functionalities and reporting requirements.

Name: Continuing Education Database

Acronym: CE database

Description: This database stores information on CE providers and general information regarding seminars, credits, etc.

Size: The current size is less than 1GB. Even with growth within the next 5 years, it is anticipated that its storage capacity will not exceed 1.5 GB.

GIS: This database does not support or contain GIS spatial operations/data.

Sharing: Not applicable.

Future: It is currently being reviewed for possible enhancements and further automation.

Information Resources Management Organizations, Policies, and Practices

Priorities

Priorities are based on statutory requirements and general needs to operate efficiently and effectively within a secured environment. Projects are prioritized base on funding and immediate or current needs.

Planning

Agency needs are reviewed periodically and future requirements assessed, taking into consideration consumer demands, industry trends and technology changes. Long term planning is generally done prior to the development of the BOP. A project list, which is composed by staff, IT personnel, end users and executive management, is reviewed periodically with the IRM, Division Heads, Chief Accountant and the Executive Director.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance practices are adhered to as required in standard risk management practices. This agency has reviewed the guidelines set out by DIR and is continuously reviewing and implementing recommended guidelines. This agency will continue to use widely adopted, non-proprietary standards, and guides whenever possible.

Personal Computer Replacement Schedule

Due to limited funds, this agency replaces PCs only as necessary. If cost effective, parts are upgraded or replaced rather than a new PC purchased. We consolidate purchases to obtain volume discounts. It is this agency's goal to replace PCs every three years if possible or by the replacement schedules published by DIR. We also take into consideration not only the life-cycle of a product but how long its technology can be supported and what is appropriate for the agency, taking into consideration its needs, constraints and end users.

Procurement

This agency uses DIR's guideline on purchases to assure its compliance with standard procedures. Purchases are made in accordance with the IT Commodity Purchasing schedule, defined by Section 1.08, HB1516, 79th Legislature, which went into effect September 1, 2005. The purchases are made based on findings of continuous hardware and software audits. Software licenses are purchased to remain in compliance with governing laws and rules.

Security

The agency follows industry best practices and State of Texas regulations for the creation of a secure computing environment. Security devices, including hardware and software, are in place to secure the network, the servers, the desktop workstations, and all aspects of digital communication in to and out of the agency. ITSS staff performs continuous reviews of security policies and procedures to ensure maximum uptime and protection from risks.

Disaster Recovery

Data backups are performed daily and stored in a fire-marshal approved fireproof safe. Weekly backup storage is located at the Texas State Library. An Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) for server uptime, in compliance with the agency's Disaster Recovery Plan and Business Continuity Plan, is currently in place.

Data Center Operations

This agency has a waiver from use of the West Texas Disaster Recovery Operations Center. The Business Continuity Plan provides for emergency operations and the performance of regular business activities in case of a disaster or emergency.

Standards

We have a proactive approach to current policies regarding email, internet use, virus protection and server use. Policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure compliance with established statewide standards and daily business functions.

Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
Computer Equipment Life Cycle

Equipment	Equipment	Date	Capital	Non-Capital	Age as of
	I.D.	Acquired			31-Aug-07
GATEWAY E4200 400	578-360	09/10/1998		2,055.00	9
DELL COMPUTER WORKSTATION, PENTIUM III, 500 MHZ	578-369	11/29/1999		2,315.00	8
DELL COMPUTER WORKSTATION, PENTIUM III, 500 MHZ	578-370	11/29/1999		2,315.00	8
COPIER- CANON NP 6551	578-367	9/14/99	7,384.05		8
PRINTER, HP LASERJET 4050	578-371	05/01/00		1,177.00	7
COMPUTER, GATEWAY GP7-933	578-374	09/08/2000		2,007.00	7
GATEWAY 4600 SE	578-378	09/06/01		1,434.00	6
GATEWAY 4600 SE	578-379	09/06/01		1,434.00	6
DELL POWEREDGE 2500 SERVER	578-380	09/06/01	5,807.00		6
HEWLETT PACKARD 8150N	578-382	09/04/01		2,672.00	6
HEWLETT PACKARD 8150N	578-383	09/04/01		2,672.00	6
HEWLETT PACKARD 2200DN	578-384	09/11/01		1,062.00	6
HEWLETT PACKARD 2200DN	578-385	09/12/01		1,264.00	6
GATEWAY SOLO 5300SE LAPTOP	578-386	09/12/01		1,518.00	6
CISCO SECURE PIX 515 FIREWALL	578-388	10/01/01		4,349.88	6
GATEWAY 500LB	578-389	08/31/02		1,681.00	5
GATEWAY 500LB	578-390	08/31/02		1,681.00	5
GATEWAY 500LB	578-391	08/31/02		1,681.00	5
GATEWAY 500LB	578-392	08/31/02		1,681.00	5
RICOH 2050L	578-393	08/31/02		1,102.00	5
GATEWAY 600X LAPTOP	578-394	08/31/03		2,209.23	4

GATEWAY PROJECTOR 210	578-397	08/31/04	2,109.80	3
HEWLETT PACKARD 2300DN	578-399	08/31/04	1,001.00	3
HEWLETT PACKARD 2300DN	578-400	08/31/04	1,001.00	3
HEWLETT PACKARD OFFICE JET 9120	578-401	08/31/04	804.00	3
GATEWAY E2300	578-402	09/01/2005	1,136.00	2
GATEWAY E2300	578-403	09/01/2005	1,136.00	2
GATEWAY E2300	578-404	09/01/2005	1,136.00	2
GATEWAY E2300	578-405	09/01/2005	1,136.00	2

Approximately 86.2% of the Board's equipment is either at or past the Department of Information Resources recommended lifespan for equipment.

